

Exodus Our Journey – Part 11 (Exodus Chptr. 9)

What Belongs to the Lord?

1. Prayer
2. Joke
3. Scripture 5th & 6th Plagues (Pestilence and Boils)
 - a. Plague #5 - Exodus 9:1-7 *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and speak to him, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me. 2 "For if you refuse to let them go and continue to hold them, 3 behold, the hand of the LORD will come with a very severe pestilence on your livestock which are in the field, on the horses, on the donkeys, on the camels, on the herds, and on the flocks. 4 "But the LORD will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt, so that nothing will die of all that belongs to the sons of Israel."'" 5 The LORD set a definite 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 sons of Israel, not one died. 7 Pharaoh sent, and behold, there was not even one of the livestock of Israel dead. But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.*
 - i. Certain types of cattle were considered sacred to the Egyptians. One cattle god was called Apis. He was considered to be the chief god. Another Egyptian bull god was called Hapi. He was regarded as the reincarnation of the creator god of Memphis.
 1. Many of the plagues that God sends are in effect “judgments” against the objects that the Egyptians worship.
 2. The Lord God is displaying that He is greater than any of the gods that the Egyptians worship, including any of their magical arts, their pagan sorceries or even their Pharaoh.
 - ii. This plague of pestilence is a continuation of the judgments that God had begun in the 4th plague, where He made a distinction between the people of Egypt and His own people.
 - b. Lets look at some of these distinctions
 - i. Last week we learned that **God considers His own people as Holy (set apart)**
 1. When God declared in **Exodus 8:23** *"I will put a division between My people and your people.* He was stating that whatever belongs to Him (i.e. My people) becomes holy – unique, separate, uncommon, not ordinary, and special.
 2. **Whatever belongs to God receives His character.** (just as when objects came in contact with something holy, they became holy).
 3. 1 Peter 1:14-16 *"As obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy.*
 4. Therefore, you are special if God has made you His.
 - a. You are proclaimed as holy when you receive Christ's gift of forgiveness and adoption as a child of God.
 - b. You have inherited His character of uniqueness, holiness and infinite beauty.
 - c. When you belong to Jesus, He does an “extreme makeover” - *“former things pass away and all things become new.”*
 - d. While the television show focuses upon the outward appearance – weight loss, hair length, color and style, maybe even plastic surgery – these things do little to change what it inside.
 - e. God does an inside makeover job.
 - i. He changes what you believe, what you think and what motivates you to act the way you do.

- ii. His goal is for you to become as He is, and to see yourself the way He sees you.
 - iii. The next time you feel worthless, respond to that lie with the truth – “I am a child of the King, I have an inheritance with the saints, I am holy as He is Holy!” Amen?
- ii. Another distinction we saw last week was found in the plague of the flies.
 - 1. God made a distinction between the territory of the people of Egypt and of the Hebrews.
 - 2. *Exodus 8:22* "But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where My people are living"
 - 3. God considers where His people live as Holy (set apart).
 - 4. Spiritual Warfare Principle – HOLY GROUND!
 - a. Abraham was told that wherever he walked would belong to him.
 - b. It is the principle we use when we prayer walk, claiming ground.
 - c. It is the same principle that was used to fell the walls of Jericho.
 - d. *Ephesians 6:12* For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.
 - e. God is illustrating that what space you occupy He occupies.
 - i. You might remember Abraham asking God to spare Sodom if it had just 10 righteous men in it. God agreed. That is a tiny percentage that can make a difference.
 - ii. Your presence as a Christian can make a difference wherever you are.
 - iii. Your presence as a Christian at work is no accident, your home in the particular neighborhood is no accident, your children’s attendance in a particular school...all have eternal and supernatural implications!
 - iv. Folks, let’s get our eyes off of what we see and see things that through the Spirit!
- iii. The plague of pestilence unveils yet another principle of distinction:
 - 1. God considers what His people own as Holy (set apart).
 - 2. *Exodus 9:4* "But the LORD will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt"
 - 3. The plague pestilence (a sickness that causes them to die) would kill only the Egyptian livestock.
 - 4. God protected the livestock which the people needed for both sustenance as well as sacrifice.
 - a. When the bible says that “God owns the cattle on a thousand hills” it is true!
 - b. He owns all of it.
 - c. And He places them in the hands of His people.
 - d. What is ours is His.
 - 5. Some of you have been through our membership class which is called “Discovering Hope.”
 - a. In that class you have heard me say that Here’s Hope doesn’t believe in tithing.
 - b. I always wait a few seconds to see people’s reactions.

- c. They either look relieved or very worried, like, “how does the church survive financially.”
 - d. About then I say, “tithing is Old Testament” – in the New Testament EVERYTHING YOU GOT belongs to the Lord!
 - e. In light of that, everything you own, all you have...your house, car, etc. belongs to God.
 - f. While I am not going to detail the implications of that this morning (maybe tonight we will) – understanding this principle can be extremely liberating to you from a “worry about what I got” perspective as well as from the ways in which God can use you to make a difference in this world.
- c. Plague #6 - Exodus 9:8-12 *Then the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Take for yourselves handfuls of soot from a kiln, and let Moses throw it toward the sky in the sight of Pharaoh. 9 "It will become fine dust over all the land of Egypt, and will become boils breaking out with sores on man and beast through all the land of Egypt." 10 So they took soot from a kiln, and stood before Pharaoh; and Moses threw it toward the sky, and it became boils breaking out with sores on man and beast. 11 The magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils, for the boils were on the magicians as well as on all the Egyptians. 12 And the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not listen to them, just as the LORD had spoken to Moses*
- i. This plague, like the 3rd plague, is done without warning to Pharaoh, but is simply done in the sight of him, so as to let Pharaoh, know it was God’s work.
 - ii. This plague was probably directed against the Egyptian god Imhotep, who was said to be the god of medicine; even those who would be thought of as closest to the Egyptian gods (the court magicians) were stricken with this plague.
 - iii. Soot from a kiln is a play upon the slavery of Israel –
 - 1. Bricks are sun baked dry and then are kiln fired to bake them until they are glass hard.
 - 2. It is from these kilns Moses is told to take soot and toss it into the air and the beginning of this plague.
 - iv. These weren’t just some inconvenient boils that you go to the doctor to lance and go on about your way. These were “erupting sores” that occurred all over the body.
 - 1. They would make a bad case of acne look good.
 - 2. This plague only served to harden Pharaoh’s heart even more.

At this point in our journey, we need to look at not only what becomes God’s when we become His, but at the compromises that each of us face in our journey to leave our old way of life.

4. THE 4 COMPROMISES we are tempted to make as believers:

- a. When Moses and Aaron appeared before Pharaoh they said - "*Thus says the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.*" And Pharaoh said - "*Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.*" (Ex. 5:1-2) Then Moses and Aaron demanded that Pharaoh let Israel go a three days journey into the wilderness.
 - i. Pharaoh again refused, and basically said that the service of God was a WASTE OF TIME. He then increased the children of Israel's burdens.
 - ii. But after the first three Plagues there came the "Plague of Flies" upon the Egyptians which we heard about last week.
 - iii. It is here that Pharaoh offered his first "compromise," -" *Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said, "Go, sacrifice to your God within the land."* (Ex. 8:25).

- iv. This is one of four offers of compromise that Pharaoh makes to Moses during the plagues.
 - v. Moses could have accepted any one of them, but to do so would have had serious implications for himself and the people of Israel.
- b. **The First Compromise - Un-offensive Religion** (Ex. 8:25,26)
- i. Pharaoh would not object to an occasional sacrifice "in the land" if that would make Israel satisfied to remain in Egypt where he could retain power over them.
 - 1. Satan does not object to us having an occasional "taste" of religion as long as we stay in the world.
 - ii. Moses responds by reminding Pharaoh that "Apis the sacred bull" was one of the gods of Egypt and if Israel offered sacrifices of "bullocks" to "Jehovah" "in the land" that would be an "abomination" to the Egyptians, and they would stone them for sacrificing the "gods of Egypt,"
 - 1. *" But Moses said, "It is not right to do so, for we will sacrifice to the LORD our God what is an abomination to the Egyptians. If we sacrifice what is an abomination to the Egyptians before their eyes, will they not then stone us?"* (Ex. 8:26)
 - iii. This compromise means that its okay to go church but don't get too religious so as to be offensive.
 - 1. After all, offensiveness is a terrible thing.
 - 2. You want people to like you, you want folks to think well of you.
 - 3. You want people to talk of you in the best light.
 - iv. The fallacy of this compromise is that one cannot be a Christian and "worship God in the land" without offending the world.
 - 1. Everything we do, everything we say, everything we stand for, everything we believe will eventually be found to be offensive to the world.
 - 2. Jesus said Mt 24:9 *"Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name"*
 - 3. Jesus said, *"If anyone is ashamed of me and my words...the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His Father's glory with the holy angels."* (Mark 8:35)
 - v. During WWI Donald Barnhouse, led the son of a prominent American family to the Lord. He was in the army, but he showed the reality of his conversion by immediately professing Christ before the soldiers of his military company. The war ended and the day came when he was to return to his pre-war life in the wealthy suburb of a large American city. This soldier talked to Barnhouse about life with his family and expressed fear that he might soon slip back into his old habits. He was afraid that love for parents, brothers, sisters, and friends might turn him from following after Jesus Christ. Barnhouse told him that if he was careful to make public confession of his faith in Christ, he would not have to worry. He would not have to give improper friends up. They would give him up.
 - vi. As a result of this conversation the young man agreed to tell the first ten people of his old set whom he encountered that he had become a Christian. The soldier went home. Almost immediately--in fact, while he was still on the platform of the suburban station at the end of his return trip--he met a girl whom he had known socially. She was delighted to see him and asked how he was doing. He told her, "The greatest thing that could possibly happen to me has happened." "You're engaged to be married," she exclaimed. "No," he told her. "It's even better than that. I've taken the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior." The girls' expression froze. She mumbled a few polite words and went on her way. A short time later the new Christian met a young man whom he had known before going into the service. "It's good to see you back," he declared. "We'll have some great parties now that

you've returned." "I've just become a Christian," the soldier said. He was thinking, That's two! Again it was a case of a frozen smile and a quick change of conversation. After this the same circumstances were repeated with a young couple and with two more old friends. By this time word had got around, and soon some of his friends stopped seeing him. He had become peculiar, they may even have called him crazy!

- vii. What had he done? Nothing but confess Christ. The same confession that had aligned him with Christ had separated him from those who did not want Jesus Christ as Savior and who, in fact, did not even want to hear about Him. <http://www.higherpraise.org/illustrations/compromise.htm>
 1. **If people aren't offended by your Christian walk it may be because you aren't walking the Christian walk.**
- c. **The Second Compromise - Uncommitted Religion** (Ex 8:27,28) *"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."*
- i. Pharaoh knew it would be easy to get Israel back if they did not go very far away.
 - ii. Satan says - "Yes, become a professing Christian, join the church, but do not go very far away."
 - iii. **Satan and Pharaoh are very similar in their motives. They want to keep their slaves.**
 1. Its okay to observe Christmas, Easter and a few other special occasions, but the rest of the year enjoy the pleasures of Egypt.
 2. Be as religious as you want when it comes to church but don't let it affect your personal life.
 3. Don't bring your religion to work or home.
 4. Don't let your religion affect what you do or what you watch on tv.
 - iv. Israel could never reach Canaan if they remained close to Egypt.
 1. And it is the same with you and I.
 2. If we stay close to Egypt, we will never experience freedom.
 - a. Just an illusion of freedom.
 - b. Just the feeling that we have done our religious duty but not so much as to change the way we act.
 - v. When Christians are heard constantly saying, "Is it a sin to do this or that?" they have been caught in the "not very far away" compromise.
 1. They are caught in the trap of religious duty.
 2. Worried that they will do something that God won't like, but wanting to do whatever they like they walk a tightrope of duty.
- d. **The Third Compromise - Private Religion** (Ex. 10:7-11)
- i. After the 7th plague (of hail) (to be discussed next week) Pharaoh once again decides to compromise and agree to let the men go to the wilderness to sacrifice without their families.
 - ii. He knew that if the men left their loved ones in Egypt it would not be long before they would be back.
 - iii. This compromise says, "let the adults become Christians if they want to, but do not force "religion" on your children."
 1. After all religion is a "personal matter.
 2. I hear people say this all the time..."*Oh we don't take our children to church, we want them to make up their own mind.*
 - a. It sounds so open minded but it is in fact, believing a lie.
 - b. What choice will a person have if their only choice is the world?

- c. You are consigning your child to a destiny of hell, because **being a Christian is not about choosing a religion but about following a savior!**
 - iv. G.K. Chesterton is quoted as saying that “One can no more have a private religion than one can have a private sun or a private moon.”
 - 1. What you believe influences your life.
 - 2. Private religion believes the lie that says, “you don’t need to tell people about Jesus. After all, religion is a private matter.”
 - v. If I watch someone drown and do nothing about it, then I am as guilty of their death as sure as if I had pushed them in!
- e. **The Fourth Compromise - Non-Sacrificial Religion** (Ex. 10:24-26)
 - 1. This compromise found Pharaoh allowing Israel to go but insisting their possessions (flocks & herds) stay behind.
 - 2. **This compromise says that when you become a Christian, you give your soul to God, but keep your possessions for yourself.**
 - ii. People that succumb to this compromise invest their money to increase their own wealth but invest nothing in the Bank of Heaven
 - iii. (Matt. 6:20) *“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. But store for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*
 - iv. There is no such thing as a Christian without sacrifice.
 - 1. Jesus said, *“deny yourself and take up your cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.”* (Mark 8:34-35)”
 - 2. Jesus said, (Luke 14:26) *“If anyone comes after me and does not hate (forsake) his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters, yes, even his own life, he cannot be my disciple”*
 - 3. Jesus said, *“Sell all you have...and come and follow me.”*
 - 4. (Mark 8:36) *“What good it it for a man to gain the whole world, yet foreit his soul”*
- f. The reason why we are to give our all is that Christ gave His all.
 - i. He gave up his place at the Father’s side to die for our sins, He gave up His rights as King of Kings to be servant and slave of all; He surrendered His perfect Holiness to bear our sins and to become sin so that we might become His righteousness.
- g. You cannot be nailed to the Cross with Jesus with your hands clutching the things of this earth. And you certainly can’t take anything with you...but you can send your wealth on ahead!
 - i. Whatever you give to Jesus for His use is stored up in your heavenly bank account.
 - ii. This compromise also includes the attitude of “holding back” something. It is the person who willingly gives 10% to God, maybe even 50%, but never 100%.
 - iii. Illustration: A certain man wanted to sell his house for \$2,000. Another man wanted very badly to buy it, but because he was poor, he couldn’t afford the full price. After much bargaining, the owner agreed to sell the house for half the original price with just one stipulation: He would retain ownership of one small nail protruding from just over the door. After several years, the original owner wanted the house back, but the new owner was unwilling to sell. So the first owner went out, found the carcass of a dead dog, and hung it from the single nail he still owned. Soon the house became unlivable, and the family was forced to sell the house to the owner of the nail. If we hold back even one small peg in our life, the devil will return to hang his rotting garbage on it, making it unfit for Christ’s habitation."

5. What happens when your commitment is total and your resolution complete?
 - a. Adoniram Judson sweated out Burma's heat for 18 years without a furlough, six years without a convert. Enduring torture and imprisonment, he admitted that he never saw a ship sail without wanting to jump on board and go home. When his wife's health broke and he put her on a homebound vessel in the knowledge he would not see her for two full years, he confided to his diary: "*If we could find some quiet resting place on earth where we could spend the rest of our days in peace. . .*" But then he finished the sentence with this remarkable postscript: "*Life is short. Millions of Burmese are perishing. I am almost the only person on earth who has attained their language to communicate salvation. . .*"
 - b. He recognized the contrast of his own comfort in light of the responsibility that lay before him of millions who were perishing without Christ. God used him to save many.

6. What is your commitment? What are your compromises?
 - a. A missionary society wrote to David Livingstone and asked, "*Have you found a good road to where you are? If so, we want to know how to send other men to join you.*" Livingstone wrote back, "*If you have men who will come only if they know there is a good road, I don't want them. I want men who will come if there is no road at all.*"

7. There are many ways for you to live out your commitment...
 - a. Disaster Relief Training – to learn how to serve for 12 – 16 hour days those who are suffering from the recent Katrina disaster or from whatever the next one is to come. Will you be on the front line? Or will you stay in a place of comfort?
 - b. A church in Louisiana operating a shelter near Baton Rouge reported over 700 professions of faith among those who were being ministered to. People are open to the gospel after adversity. The question is, “are we ready to be bothered with discomfort so that they can hear?”
 - c. Jesus held nothing back. He gave His all...for the love of the Father; so you would not perish but have everlasting life. Will you give your all to Him?