

Lessons From the 10 Plagues (*Part 4: livestock, boils, hail*)

Purpose: to show three things: 1) that God is merciful and therefore patient with the lost, 2) when men do not listen, things become worse for them, and 3) God will protect and eventually deliver His people.

Some have said that the God of the Old Testament is mean and cruel, particularly when reading events in which He makes judgements on the wicked. Is it true?

Reminder of three things:

- God is merciful and patient, even to those who are proud and rebellious
- When men do not listen, things become worse for them
- God will always protect and eventually deliver His people

We are going to consider three more of the plagues of Egypt in Exodus 9

Fifth Plague: livestock – attacking the resources of the nation (Exodus 9:1-7)

- Cattle – meat, leather, milk – all necessities of living
- Horses – transportation
- Donkeys – beast that carry burdens
- Camels – long distance transportation, commerce
- Oxen – plough their fields
- Sheep – food, clothing (wool)
- A very severe pestilence – in effect and consequence

Once again, this plague was directed against some of their main deities:

- Osiris – the god of life and death
- Hathor, goddess with a cow head;
- Apis, the bull god, symbol of fertility
- Mendes – the ram god over nature
- Numbers 33:4; Exodus 18:11

What did the LORD do?

- The LORD warned them
- The LORD made a difference – none of Israel's livestock dies
- The LORD told them exactly when this would happen

What was Pharaoh's response?

- Pharaoh still hardens his heart and would not let them go

Sixth Plague: boils – their first physical suffering (Exodus 9:8-12)

- Boils (Hebrew *shechiyn*) - boil, inflamed spot, inflammation, eruption, to burn, ulcer
- Sores (Hebrew *ababuah*) - blisters, boils (from root, to swell up, to belch forth)

Again, this plague stood in the face of their gods:

- Sekhmet – warrior goddess and goddess of healing
- Isis – goddess of healing, motherhood and fertility

Moses scattered the ashes from a furnace in the sight of Pharaoh – Pharaoh saw the miracle directly from the hand of Moses!
The furnaces that were used to oppress Israel were now used to punish the Egyptians.

But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be His people, an inheritance, as you are this day.
Deuteronomy 4:20

The magicians could not stand before Moses – they were defeated! They are never mentioned again.
The LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart – this is what Paul spoke of in the book of Romans:

And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;
Romans 1:28

Seventh Plague: Hail (Exodus 9:13 – 35)

Note a few differences

- The plagues have become more severe and damaging
- The language has become more specific and intense - *...to your very heart, and on your servants and on your people...*
- The purpose has become clearer –
...that you may know that there is none like Me in all the earth.

Exodus 9:14

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.

Exodus 9:16

Once again, their gods are targeted:

- Nut – goddess of the sky
- Set – god of desert storms

This was no ordinary hailstorm

- Very heavy and able to kill
- Brought forth in Egypt, where it almost never even rains!
- There were also thunderbolts, and fire mingled with the hail

Pharaoh responded differently:

- He admitted that he had sinned
- He asked Moses to ask God to stop the thundering and hail
- He told Moses that he would let them go
- He hardened his heart and did not let them go

What can we see so far?

- God is merciful and patient, even to those who are proud and rebellious
 - The first four plagues (Nile to blood, frogs, gnats and flies) are annoying, but not too hurtful

- The fifth plague (death of livestock) is costly to the environment and economically
- The sixth plague (Boils) causes physical pain
- The seventh plague (Hail) produces fear and destruction
- He gave them chances to repent as things became worse
- God will always look after His children