GOD’S MESSAGE TO PHARAOH

 **DATE: 5/27/2018 pm**

**TEXT: Exodus 7:14-25**

**INTRODUCTION**

God in His grace has been giving Pharaoh opportunities to repent and let His people go, but to no avail

Pharaoh's heart is Proud, Hard and Stubborn

He feels that he doesn't have to obey the Lord since he doesn’t know Him

People today feel the same way

The Bible makes it clear if you don’t obey the Lord and bow to Him now, you will eventually bow to Him later, but then, it will be too late

**Phil. 2:9-11 … ; Romans 2:4,5 …**

**1.** Pharaoh’s attitude hasn’t cost him yet

But that is about to change

Rebellion against God is always costly

Someone will always lose when they choose to rebel against the Lord

The word ***“plague”*** means *a blow or a stroke*

It indicates that the hand of the Lord was going to come down upon the Egyptians

**2.** The 1st Plague will open a New part in the Life of Moses

**Exodus 7** begins the 3rd Division of this book

-- Chapters 1, 2 dealt with the Birth of Moses

-- Chapters 3-6 dealt with the Call of Moses

These first six chapters dealt with The Person of the Moses

Chapters 7-10 will deal with the Conflict with Pharaoh as God frees His people from bondage

This section begins the first great concentrated period of biblical miracles

Until now the dominant focus has been on preparing the deliverer (Moses) for the Exodus

From this point, the account will focus on preparing Pharaoh for it

God is about to send 10 plagues or judgments upon Pharaoh and Egypt

It is clear from the outset that God could have delivered His people simply and suddenly,

But instead, He chose to draw out the process with the series of plagues

These 10 plagues are grouped into three cycles of three plagues each, with the tenth being a climatic judgment

A look at these plagues reveals some interesting insights, contrasts, and comparisons

For Example …

Plagues 1, 4, and 7 begin each cycle and are introduced by the words, ***“in the morning”***

-- In the first cycle, the 3 plagues were Loathsome

Hateful, detestable, abhorrent, repulsive, repugnant, disgusting, revolting, sickening, abominable,  despicable, contemptible, reprehensible

And they affected the *comfort* of the Egyptians

Israel was afflicted too

Aaron's rod was used in each of these plagues

They were the bloody water, frog infestation, gnats or a mosquito pestilence

-- In the second cycle, the plagues were Bothersome

Affecting their *possessions* such as land, cattle, and themselves

No rod or staff was used and only the Egyptians were affected

The plagues consisted of a pestilence of flies, the death of the livestock, and bothersome boils on their bodies

-- In the third cycle, the plagues were Natural Disasters

Bringing desolation and death to the Egyptians

Which consisted of the Locust, the Darkness and the Death of the first born

Moses' staff was used and in the final plague, where the firstborn died

God knows how to get the attention of those concerned

He messed with their Comfort, their Possessions, and their Health

The longer sinners resist God's will, and refuse to hear His Word,

The louder He has to speak to them through His Judgments

In all three cycles, a warning was issued in the first two Judgments of each cycle,

But no warning was given before the final judgment of each cycle

These 10 plagues occurred over a period of at least nine months

The Nile rises in July and August (Plague 1)

The barley ripens in January (Plague 7)

The east wind blows in March and April (Plague 8)

And, we know the Passover is in April (Plague 10)

When we look at the plagues, we will also note that many of the judgments and events in Egypt will take place again during the Tribulation period, described in the book of Revelation

In spite of all the plagues, none of them softened Pharaoh's heart

He let them go after the death of the firstborn, only to pursue Israel later to his own death

Pharaoh was a proud man

Let’s pray and look at …

**“GOD’S MESSAGE TO PHARAOH”**

**~~~Prayer~~~**

First, let’s look at …

**I. THE “DEFIANCE” – v. 14**

***“And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart is hardened, he refuseth to let the people go”***

The heart of this king is hardened or dull

It was becoming harder each time he was approached by Moses

He had to realize that God was behind all these miracles

The Lord was giving him an opportunity to obey

This is consistent with God's character

He is merciful and longsuffering, giving men time to repent before His judgment falls

**Lamentations 3:22,23 – *“It is of the LORD’S mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not” “They are new every morning: great is Thy faithfulness”***

-- In Noah's day, men had 120 years after they were notified that judgment would come upon the world

-- Before Israel was taken into captivity in Babylon, prophets were sent to warn the nation

-- Jonah was sent to Nineveh and warned the people to repent lest they be destroyed

-- God has been trying to get the attention of the US for years now

God in His mercy uses gentle methods first to get us to repent before He uses much stronger methods

Our Lord is a merciful Lord

Yet, men go on in their **“Defiance”**

Pharaoh is but an Example

First, we need to realize that …

**A.** **Disobedience hardens us**

Pharaoh is about to learn when you reject God's Grace and Mercy, you will reap the consequences

**Romans 1:25, 26 –** ***“Who changed the truth of GOD into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen” “For this cause GOD gave them up unto vile affections:” (“Gave them up”* – vs. 24, 26** ***“Gave them over”* - v. 28)**

Mankind has become so hard that they lose their desire to turn to the Lord and end up destroying themselves

This Principle is woven throughout the Scriptures

**B.** **People are not lost because they are hardened**

*They are hardened because they are lost*

A person must turn to Christ if they are to have any hope

The Lord always gets His way

He can apply the pressure to bring us to a point where we finally submit our self to Him

We can acknowledge Him as Lord now or after we die,

But then it will be too late

Our excuses will be unacceptable then

**Romans 1:20 – *“For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, …***

***… even His eternal power and godhead; so that they are without excuse:”***

**THE “DEFIANCE”**

**II. THE “DIRECTIONS” – vs. 15,16 …**

God tells Moses – Pharaoh's heart is hard

Tomorrow morning, go to him, he will be by the river

Tell him that I told you to let My people go, but so far you haven’t listened … Get with it Pharaoh!

Imagine this!

This would have taken a lot of courage for sure

How did Moses get away with this?

The answer is God protected Moses and Pharaoh was leery

**THE “DEFIANCE”**

**THE “DIRECTIONS”**

**III. THE “DETAILS” – vs. 17-25 …**

Moses is to inform Pharaoh of the first plague

God is going to change the water of the Nile River into blood

Fish will die and stink and the Egyptians will Loathe to drink the water

Streams, rivers, ponds, and pools would all be affected

Eighty years earlier, Pharaoh's daughter was at this river and rescued baby Moses

Moses faces a different king now

The tables are turned and the Nile River becomes a place of death instead of a place of safety

In this first plague, we see God dealing with the instrument of death that killed thousands of Jewish baby boys that were drowned and perhaps eaten by crocodiles

The bloody Nile would be a reminder of the bloodshed eighty years earlier

God was confronting Egypt with its sin

**A. ‘Proving’**

The Lord was Proving to Pharaoh and the Egyptians the non-existence of their Egyptian gods

One reason why the Pharaoh may have been at the river was to worship it

The Nile River was worshiped as a god

It represented the chief god of Egypt

Hapi or Apis, the bull god, was the god of the Nile

Isis was the goddess of the Nile

Khnum was the ram god and was the guardian of the Nile

The Nile River was considered as the body and blood of Osiris himself

The yearly flooding symbolized the miraculous rebirth of Osiris, god of the earth according to the Egyptians

**B. ‘Blood’**

What was the Blood?

There are a variety of thoughts on this topic

**1.** The sources for the Nile's Flooding each year are the equatorial rains, which come from …

The White Nile, which originates in east-central Africa (present-day Uganda) and flows sluggishly through swamps in eastern Sudan

The Blue Nile and the Atbara River, which both fill with melting snow from the mountains

They become raging torrents filled with tons of red soil from the basins of both these rivers

The higher the inundation, the deeper the color of the red waters

This gives the water the appearance of blood

This is one theory (Not a very good one)

**2.** Another theory is the river turned red from a type of algae

Known as *flagellates,* that come from the Sudan swamps and Lake Tana along the White Nile River

These algae produce a stench and the deadly fluctuation in the oxygen level of the river that proves to be so fatal to fish

It is also known as *Red Tide*

Such a process, at the command of God, could have been the case for this first plague

**3.** There is another thought about the bloody river

God smote the heart of the nation by turning the water to real blood

The Hebrew word for *“****blood”*** occurs over 150 times in the Pentateuch (1st 5 Books of the Bible)

It is always used to describe real biological blood,

Except in two passages - **Gen. 49:11; Deut. 32:14**

(Where it speaks figuratively of the juice of the grape)

If Moses had simply meant that the Nile turned red

He could have used any of several words to signify that color

I believe this was some sort of blood

I can't explain it because it was a miracle of God

It even affected the water that was in the storage containers – (end of **v. 19**)

(Which does away with the other theories)

The water and food supply would be severely affected by this contamination

The Bible says in **v. 18** that the Egyptians ***“lothe”*** the water

The word ***“lothe”*** comes from a Hebrew word which means *to be weary, impatient*

The use of this word here carries the idea of making someone weary in doing something, or *to strenuously exert oneself*

It seems to always indicate *exhausted patience*

The term seems to imply that the Egyptians, not being able to drink the contaminated water …

… had to expend all their energy looking for water to drink, in frustration of course

They exhausted themselves in hunting for water

Kind-a like when Pharaoh made the Israelite look for their own stubble

**C. ‘Frustration’**

It was Frustrating because of the great love the people had for the waters of the Nile

The force of this expression can’t be understood without taking into consideration how the Egyptians felt about the waters of the Nile

The water of the Nile is known to be very thick and muddy, and the Egyptians had to filter it through pots made of white earthenware, or sometimes through a paste made from almonds

The vessels of wood and stone mentioned in **v. 18** may refer to the process of filtration, which no doubt had been practiced for thousands of years

It was said that when a person drank the water of the Nile for the first time that they couldn’t believe how great it tasted

There just was something in it inexpressibly agreeable and pleasing to the taste

It was also very good for the health of a person

No matter what quantity someone drank, large or small, it never upset the stomach

So, for the water to be turned to blood was a catastrophe

The Egyptian priests abhorred blood, never performing bloody sacrifices

The sweet water was now an object of disdain

The Egyptians turned from their gods in disgust to other means of survival

That which they looked to as a source of life became a source of death

**D. ‘Blessing or a Curse’**

This same principle applies even today

People look to good deeds, idols, memberships, self-righteousness, or dependence upon men for eternal life

They think these are the sources to eternity

But instead they are the sources of death

They will not get someone to Heaven

The underlying principle here is the fact that what God has given us can become a blessing or curse depending on how we use those gifts

When we abuse what the Lord has given us, that which is good can become a curse

The Egyptians found blood instead of water when they needed to drink, cook, wash, or water crops

There was suffering when the blood was where the water should have been

God was giving the Egyptians a taste of their own …

… medicine after they had murdered all those Jewish baby boys years earlier in the same river

The river that was a blessing became a curse

When God's blessings are misused, they become a curse

Our senses of sight, touch, taste, hearing, and speaking are gifts of God that help us live day by day

They help us serve the Lord and others

Yet, these same senses, when abused, can become a curse

We can become addicted or enslaved to harmful things when we abuse our senses

**E. ‘Idols to Plagues’**

Another principle revealed here is anything which becomes an idol to someone, will one day become a plague to them

God demands preeminence in our lives

**Ill.** Someone has written a wise exhortation regarding this principle – *“The dearest idol I have known, whate'er that idol be; help me to tear it from Thy throne, and worship only Thee”*

We also see that anything which tastes sweet in sin, will someday become unpalatable

**Proverbs 9:17 – *“Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant”***

In their sin, the Egyptians had enjoyed the Nile

But now, **v. 21 – *“the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river”***

Because it was turned to blood

This event reminds us of the fact that sin's sweetness soon sours

**THE “DEFIANCE”**

**THE “DIRECTIONS”**

**THE “DETAILS”**

Lastly, notice …

**IV. THE “DUPLICATION” - vs. 22, 23**

***“And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, neither did he hearken unto them; as the LORD had said” “And Pharaoh turned and went into his house, neither did he set his heart to this also”***

**A. Satan is the great imitator and counterfeiter**

**II Corinthians 11:14 - *“And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light”***

He has the ability to copy some of God's works, but not all

These magicians duplicated again what Moses did

***“And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments:”***

The magicians would not have much water left to turn into blood, though (Think about it)

To turn water into blood, they would have to get their water from the wells that the Egyptians had dug for water after all the other water had turned to blood

Therefore, though they could duplicate the miracle,

They were no match for Moses and Aaron who did a much greater miracle

God is never second best

**B. Why didn’t the magicians change the blood back into water?**

That would have been a far greater Miracle!

That would have alleviated the misery and distress of the people of Egypt

Changing what water was left into blood, only aggravated the situation for the Egyptians

There was not much good water around and the magicians made it even less

That was pretty stupid, but this is what Satan does to people when they reject God

He robs them of common sense!

**II Timothy 3:8-9 – *“Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith” “But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was”***

I never cease to be amazed at the stupid choices that people make in their lives

They ruin their lives and create more problems for themselves when they run from God

What mercies Egypt had … the magicians would take even those away

All of this tells us that the devil cannot remove judgment, he will only compound and add to it

He loves to rub people noses in it

Likewise, when people come up with their clever arguments to reject God's will and way,

They don’t improve the situation but only make it worse

This duplication by the magicians dulled Pharaoh heart even more

He considered the blood yet as another trick

Pharaoh accepted the inferior performance by the magicians

But the great work of Moses and Aaron was not convincing to his heart (go figure)

**CONCLUSION – vs. 24, 25 …**

It seems that the water that filtered through the soil or sand was not stricken

The people had to abandon the Nile River and their gods to get a drink of water

It seems that their religion was out the window when it came to survival

For seven days they had to dig for their water to survive

Seven days reveals the Obstinance of Pharaoh and the Opportunity that God was giving Him to repent before the next plague

If God is trying to get our attention, then pay attention

If He is giving you an opportunity to be saved or serve Him, then take advantage of the opportunity

**II Corinthians 6:2 – “*(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)”***

**THE “DEFIANCE”**

**THE “DIRECTIONS”**

**THE “DETAILS”**

**THE “DUPLICATION”**