A PHONY PHARAOH

**DATE: 8/5/2018 pm**

**TEXT: Exodus 8:20-32** (Stand & Read)

**INTRODUCTION**

In the earlier verses of this chapter we’re seen the magicians realizing that it’s the God of the Hebrews Who is behind the first 3 Plagues

They declare them to be The Finger of God

But Pharaoh again refuses to soften

The heart of this king is as cold as ice

It was no surprise to Moses though,

Because God has already told him that Pharaoh would choose to respond this way

The pressure continues to Build

Let's see what happens next with the 4th Plague?

As we look at **“A PHONY PHARAOH”**

The fourth plague, starts the second set of 3 plagues,

The Bible tells us that this Plague consists of a ***“grievous swarm”*** as described in **v. 24**

They seem to be some sort of flying insects

**Psalm 78:45** speaks of it as ***“divers [various] sorts of flies”***

Not being certain of what particular type of insects were involved really doesn’t matter …

It’s the Results that are significant, for this Plague was one of Judgment; and, as we will see shortly …

Scripture is clear about the Results this 4th Plague brings about

**~~~Prayer~~~**

**I. THE “COMMAND” TO STAND – vs. 20, 21 …**

Moses is commanded again to Stand before the king early in the morning at the River's edge

The same alternative to Pharaoh's problem is being offered again

God's invitations are simple and to the point … Obey

Why is it important to Obey the Bible?

The Bible has a lot to say about Obedience

In fact, Obedience is an essential part of the Christian faith

**Philippians 2:8** tells us that Jesus Himself was ***“obedient unto death, even the death of the cross”***

For Christians, the act of taking up our cross and following Christ (**Matt. 16:24**) means Obedience

The Bible says that we show our love for Jesus by Obeying Him in all things

**John 14:15 –** ***“If ye love Me, keep My commandments”***

A Christian who is Not Obeying Christ’s commands should be asked …

**Luke 6:46 – *“And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”***

Why are they at the water?

There are a couple of ideas here

Some believe that Pharaoh went to the Nile River to Worship

In this case it would be the River god and a special festival that honored the waters of the Nile

This would have been around the end of October or early November

The waters would now be residing and the first traces of vegetation would be seen on fresh soil

Another reason he may have been at the water early in the morning was to, well, go to the restroom and freshen up for the day

The phrase ***“cometh forth to the water”*** is from a Hebrew word which means *to relieve oneself*

Whatever the reason, Moses was to Confront the king at this time

We see a couple of things in God’s Command to Moses

**A. The ‘Mandate’ – v. 20 a**

God ordered Moses to ***“stand before Pharaoh”***

This is no easy assignment

We kind of just picture Moses waltzing in and Commanding Pharaoh

God command him to meet Pharaoh as he goes down to the waters because he would have never been able to go waltzing into the palace

Moses' mandate was to ***“stand”*** before this vile, brutal man who hated his God

It’s easy to stand before those who sympathize with our beliefs,

But it is not so easy to Stand before those who viciously oppose our faith

Peter was outspoken in his Stand for Christ when he was before the disciples

But it wouldn’t be long before he denied Christ when he was with those who were hostile towards Christ

We’re all like that

However, if we are to be truly dedicated to the Lord,

We need to learn to ***“stand”*** regardless of our situation

**Ephesians 6:13 – *“Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand”***

**B. The ‘Message’ – v. 20 b**

As it has been so many times before,

Moses' Message was – ***“Thus saith the LORD”***

Here is another place where dedication is tested

Moses, as most pastors, can easily understand …

Would have preferred to give Pharaoh a different message

A message that would Not upset Pharaoh

But Moses was to declare God's Word

Preaching God's Word may mean preaching what is unpopular

But dedication will preach God's Word in every situation

**II Timothy 4:2 – *“Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine”***

**THE “COMMAND” TO STAND**

**II. THE “SEPARATION” – vs. 22 – 25 …**

God now does, what He hasn’t done, up to this point

He has Moses tell Pharaoh that He is Not going to allow the Plague to affect the Hebrews

The Israelites are believed to have suffered with the Egyptians in the First 3 Plague

The Commentaries believe this was allowed as a chastisement because of Israel’s unbelief and murmuring

But now there is a new Feature as the second cycle of Plagues begins

God now offers a new sign which is the Exemption of His people from the Plagues

**v. 22 - *“And I will sever in that day the land of Goshen”***

 **v. 23 – *“And I will put a division between my people and thy people”***

He says He will ***“sever”*** and put a ***“division”*** between His people and the Egyptians

The land of Goshen would be spared

Goshen was in the eastern delta region

About 50 miles northeast of modern day Cairo is the Wadi Tumilat (Wadi is Arabic for Valley)

A valley 5 or 6 miles wide and 30 miles long, ending in Lake Timsah, which is now part of the present-day Suez Canal

This was the region of Goshen

Israel would be redeemed by the Lord

Notice that God made sure to call them ***“My people”* v. 22**

For they belonged to the Lord, not Pharaoh

This redemption would be a great encouragement to the Jews and a source of bewilderment and discouragement to the Egyptians

**A. The Sureness of God’s Word – v. 24 …**

***“And the LORD did so;”***

The first 3 Plagues were an Annoyance

Now Egypt’s prosperity and people are greatly affected

The Plagues have come from the water, the land, and now from the air

The voice of repentance has been summoned from all directions as God keeps His Word

**II Peter 1:19 – *“We have also a more Sure Word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:”***

The flies came and the land was ***“corrupted”*** which means it was *destroyed, marred, and devastated*

The crops, land, livestock and people were injured and severely affected

Even today, there are many flies in Egypt

(My family used to travel there to reset their visas)

What were the swarms of flies?

The swarms were a variety of different insects that devoured the land

Again **Psalm 78:45** says **- “*He sent divers sorts of flies among them, which devoured them; and frogs, which destroyed the”***

The flies possibly included cattle or dog flies which have very painful bites

These flies lay 600-800 eggs in rotting waste

The death of the frogs and creatures in the rivers would have breed these flies like crazy

The lack of frogs to eat the flies would …

… also have contributed to their multiplying

This verse tells us that they infested all the houses

Their bites are on the lower extremities and are very painful

They are the principle transmitters of skin anthrax which they contract by contact with animals that die from anthrax

Some of the diseases can cause blindness

The flies could also have been the scarab beetle

It was considered sacred and not to be destroyed

It too, preys upon flesh, tormenting people and animals and also on plant life

In Egypt, the beetle was an emblem of eternal life

This sacred insect became a curse to the people and a plague upon the land

The Egyptian gods were being mocked again

Chepra - a man with a beetle's head

He was the sun god and creator

Uatchit - this god was represented by the fly

Re - The god of the sun, earth, and sky again represented by a fly

**B. The Separation causes a Solution – v. 25 …**

This Separation startles and shocks Pharaoh

Notice that he sends for Moses

***“And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron,”***

For the first time the king pays attention to God's commands and tells them they can go worship the Lord

***“and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land”***

The Egyptians were faced with the Plague of flying insects

Moses was faced with a Decision

Pharaoh offers a Solution

But the World’s solutions are never right

Go sacrifice where? The king says, ***“in the land”***

Let’s look at the history of the requests Moses made to go forth and worship and also the location

**Exodus 3:18 – “*And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God”***

The original request was a 3 day journey into the wilderness in order to Sacrifice to the LORD

**Exodus 4:23 – “*And I say unto thee, Let My son go, that he may serve Me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn”***

The purpose of the departure was for God's people to Serve Him

**Exodus 5;1 – “*And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let My people go, that they may hold a feast unto Me in the wilderness”***

Israel is to depart in order to Celebrate

**1.** The order of these 3 events is important

If judgment is to be averted, there must be *sacrifice first*

**Hebrews 9:22 - *“And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission”***

In the Tabernacle, the brazen altar was situated first

*After Sacrifice comes Service*

First, there is Reconciliation and then comes Service

The laver in the Tabernacle represented and was used for daily cleansing in Service

*Following Sacrifice and Service comes Celebrating*

Which speaks of fellowship and gladness

The Holy Place of the Tabernacle was a place of service, fellowship, and gladness as seen in the table of shewbread, which was the place of fellowship for the priests and in the altar of incense, which was the place of fellowship with God

This same order was illustrated in the life of the prodigal son in **Luke 15**

The son was *reconciled* to the father

He took his proper place as *servant*

***“Make me one of thy hired servants”***

Then came the *Celebrating* as the fatted calf was killed for the feast

***“And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it;”***

**2.** Notice where Pharaoh tells them to Worship

***“in the land”***

He says you can worship but Don't leave Egypt

Egypt is a type or symbol of the world in the Bible

Satan is the Ruler or god of this world

**II Corinthians 4:4 – *“In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them”***

Satan's desire for the church today is to continue to incorporate the world's lifestyle and priorities

Serving the Lord is NOT a priority of the world

The lost do not even know the Lord for they are spiritually blind

Satan desires that believers live like the unsaved

It’s OK to act religious and talk God-talk,

But you need to stay in Egypt and live like Egyptians

Don't separate yourself from Egypt, from the carnality of the world

Don't trust Christ as your Saviour, and if you do, don't live like Him or for Him

Compromise in worship with the world doesn't work or mix

For holy worship and heathen worship are 180 degrees apart

You cannot please two masters at the same time

**Galatians 1:4 – “*Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:”***

**John 15:19 - “*If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you”***

**John 17:14 – “*I have given them Thy Word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world”***

**James 4:4 – “*Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God”***

Like a porcupine in a balloon factory, worldliness and holy worship don't mix

Put them together and you have nothing but confusion and conflict

Satan is constantly trying to get the church to compromise, mix, and adopt the philosophy of this wicked world

In the areas of philosophy, music, marriage, divorce, gambling, homosexuality, alcohol, church history, etc.

Compromise with carnality is an effective tool of Satan to weaken the Christian

Compromise appeals because it seems to offer you your desire quickly

You don't have to wait and that is very appealing to impatient people

Compromise often provides a shortcut to your goal,

But, of course, the shortcut is not without your sacrificing some part of your goal

The compromise would argue that it is better to have part of your desire than not any,

But what this actually does is give you part now instead of all of your goals or desires later

You end up being cheated by your compromises

In the area of character and spirituality, it is a tragedy because compromise promotes defilement

Great pressure is placed upon Christians, especially pastors, to compromise Biblical principles and convictions

If you are unwilling to compromise, …

You are considered unreasonable, stubborn, and inconsiderate

Compromise may be acceptable in some situations,

But it is never acceptable when right and wrong are involved

Compromise with evil is a crack that ends up opening the garage door to carnality in the Christian and in the church

**Humor:** A hunter raised his rifle and took careful aim at a large bear. When about to pull the trigger, the bear spoke in a soft soothing voice, *"Isn't it better to talk than to shoot? What do you want? Let's negotiate the matter."* Lowering his rifle, the hunter replied, *"I want a fur coat."* *"Good,"* said the bear, *"that is a negotiable matter. I only want a full stomach, so let us negotiate a compromise."* They sat down to negotiate and after a time the bear walked away alone. The negotiations had been successful. The bear had a full stomach, and the hunter had his fur coat!

Satan says to you, *“Let’s negotiate”*

But there are some things that cannot be negotiated

We cannot compromise the church with the world

God demands our obedience to His Word,

But compromise opposes complete obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ

It says that God is not Lord and we have some say in our decisions

It sanctions negotiation with God's orders,

Not submission to them

All of this is a subtle assault on obedience to God and to His lordship and mastery of our lives

We need to make up our mind whom we are going to serve

**Matthew 6:24 - “*No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon”***

**Nehemiah 6:3 says – *“And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?”***

**THE “COMMAND” TO STAND**

**THE “SEPARATION” IN COMPROMISE**

**III. THE “STEADFASTNESS” OF MOSES – vs. 26-32**

Moses wisely rejects Pharaoh's offer of compromise

He is governed by the conviction and principle of obeying the Lord's commands

Nothing less than God's demands can be accepted

If we are to go free and obtain all the inheritance and blessings that God has for us, there must be no compromise with sin

There must be a separation from the world in our lifestyle as well as our heart

There must be no compromise on morality

A compromise between vice and virtue is an insult to virtue because there would be no virtue at all

There must be no compromise with doctrine

It is either false doctrine or BIBLE truth

Notice I said Bible truth, not traditions

**1.** Moses said *- We cannot worship here in Egypt*

He confronts the compromise with conviction

He is not wishy-washy, or namby-pamby

Israel's worship was much different than Egypt's

The sacrifice of the Egyptian sacred animals would be considered as an abomination and would invoke the death penalty

Perhaps few people were more superstitious than the Egyptians

Almost every production of nature was an object of their religious worship: the sun, moon, planets, stars, the Nile river, animals of all sorts, from the human being to the monkey, dog, cat, and ibis, and even the onions and leeks which grew in their gardens

Jupiter was adored by the Egyptians under the form of a ram, Apollo under the form of a crow, Bacchus under that of a goat, and Juno under that of a heifer

**2.** Moses feared an uprising & stoning of an Egyptian mob

He knew what he was talking about

Later when the Romans took possession of Egypt,

… the people submitted without resistance to have their lives and property at the mercy of a foreign nation

But when a Roman soldier, killed a cat in the streets of Alexandria, they violently tore that soldier apart limb from limb

A Jewish colony in the upper Nile region endured a massacre at the hands of the Egyptians in the 5th century because of animal sacrifice

Even today, the true worship of God and faith's sacrifice is considered an abomination

The cross of Christ is offensive to a sin-hardened world

Why? Christ’s Death on the cross …

Speaks of man's *condition /* We are sinners

Speaks of man's *condemnation*

The price for sin is death

Speaks of the *cause* of His death / Us

Speaks of the *choice and conclusion* of men

They either believe or reject

Speaks of *consequences*

Reject Christ and you are lost

Accept Him and you have eternal life

**A. The Second Request for Compromise – v. 28**

Pharaoh says, *OK, you can go into the wilderness, but don't go very far*

Pharaoh is afraid of losing them

This compromise is the same tool that Satan uses today to hinder Christians from serving the Lord

We are tempted to be lukewarm, borderline Christians

The king said first, *"Don't go"*

Then he said, *"If you are going to serve God, don't go very far”*

Don't be fanatical, too extreme or zealous, be like everyone else

When we look in Genesis at Lot, we find that he didn't go far away

His lukewarm worldliness paralyzed his preaching

He lost his family in the process

Beloved, we are to live differently than this world

You can do as you want (and you’re gonna)

Just tell me where it has gotten you with your family

We are to be Christlike which in turn will make us look strange in the eyes of the lost

**B. The Supplication that is Offered – vs. 29, 30**

Moses promised to pray for the departure of the flies,

But he also rebukes the king about any further lies

The fact that Moses changes the conversation to the third person, referring to the Pharaoh, makes this statement very powerful

Moses was not kidding

The king was supposed to be a model of truth and justice, but he was far from it

Deliverance would come, but it would come tomorrow

This delay reminds us that the consequences of our disobedience are not necessarily removed quickly

We've seen this truth before, and it is a sobering truth that ought to hasten our repentance of our wickedness

**C. A Sweep of the Land – vs. 31, 32**

Pharaoh's cold heart thaws a little

As soon as the heat of the present plague miraculously departed, his proud heart freezes up again

God intends that His goodness should encourage men to repent,

But many are like Pharaoh and pervert their blessings to encourage sinning instead of repentance

**Romans 2:4 - “*Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?”***

Many interpret delays, reprieve and escape from troubles as a sign that their evil was not so bad after all

And, as a result, they pursue their evil again

Such reasoning is folly

**Ecclesiastes 8:11 – “*Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil”***

The fact that every fly was gone is phenomenal, but this is the way the Lord works

He is thorough when He cleans

When it comes to our sin, He washes away every single one when we put our faith in Christ

**I John 1:7 – “*But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin”***

If you are a Christian, let me ask – *“Are you living in Egypt? Are you lukewarm and living on the borderline?"*

Step out for Christ and stand for Him

Make your life count for the Lord and cease from any compromises with sin

**CONCLUSION**

**THE “COMMAND” TO STAND**

**THE “SEPARATION” IN COMPROMISE**

**THE “STEADFASTNESS” OF MOSES**

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