

Don't Miss the Finger of God

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Exodus: Redeemer and Redeemed / Exodus 7:14–8:19

Discussion Questions

1. Reflect on a time when you experienced a "plague" in your life. How did you see God's hand at work, and what was your response?
 2. Pharaoh's heart hardened despite witnessing God's power. Can you think of modern examples where people react similarly to evidence of God's presence or action?
 3. Discuss the significance of God using plagues as a judgment against the gods of Egypt. How does this demonstrate His sovereignty and call for us to place our trust in Him alone?
 4. How does Christ's victory over sin and death reflect God's ultimate power and mercy? Share personal reflections on how this truth affects your faith and life decisions.
 5. The sermon mentions the inevitability of recognizing God's sovereignty. How does this perspective influence your daily actions and long-term goals?
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Sermon Notes

Main Idea: At some point, each one of us will have to reckon with the evidence of Almighty God's handiwork.

You see the Bible is clear that, apart from Christ's work in us, we all have a willful knowledge gap. The question for us to settle in our hearts is what we will do to remedy this gap?

Exodus 7:14–8:19 ESV

¹⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh's heart is hardened; he refuses to let the people go. ¹⁵ Go to Pharaoh in the morning, as he is going out to the water. Stand on the bank of the Nile to meet him, and take in your hand the staff that turned into a serpent. ¹⁶ And you shall say to him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you, saying, "Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness." But so far, you have not obeyed. ¹⁷ Thus says the LORD, "By this you shall know that I am the LORD: behold, with the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water that is in the Nile, and it shall turn into blood. ¹⁸ The fish in the Nile shall die, and the Nile will stink, and the Egyptians will grow weary of drinking water from the Nile." ' ' ¹⁹ And the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, their canals, and their ponds, and all their pools of water, so that they may become blood, and there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, even in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.' " ²⁰ Moses and Aaron did as the LORD commanded. In the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants he lifted up the staff and struck the water in the Nile, and all the water in the Nile turned into blood. ²¹ And the fish in the Nile died, and the Nile stank, so that the Egyptians could not drink water from the Nile. There was blood throughout all the land of Egypt. ²² But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts. So Pharaoh's heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said. ²³ Pharaoh turned and went into his

house, and he did not take even this to heart. ²⁴ And all the Egyptians dug along the Nile for water to drink, for they could not drink the water of the Nile. ²⁵ Seven full days passed after the LORD had struck the Nile. ¹ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go in 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 plague all your country with frogs. ³ The Nile shall swarm with frogs that shall come up into your house and into your bedroom and on your bed and into the houses of your servants and your people, and into your ovens and your kneading bowls. ⁴ The frogs shall come up on you and on your people and on all your servants.' " ⁵ And the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your hand with your staff over the rivers, over the canals and over the pools, and make frogs come up on the land of Egypt!' " ⁶ So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. ⁷ But the magicians did the same by their secret arts and made frogs come up on the land of Egypt. ⁸ Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and said, "Plead with the LORD to take away the frogs from me and from my people, and I will let the people go to sacrifice to the LORD." ⁹ Moses said to Pharaoh, "Be pleased to command me when I am to plead for you and for your servants and for your people, that the frogs be cut off from you and your houses and be left only in the Nile." ¹⁰ And he said, "Tomorrow." Moses said, "Be it as you say, so that you may know that there is no one like the LORD our God. ¹¹ The frogs shall go away from you and your houses and your servants and your people. They shall be left only in the Nile." ¹² So Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh, and Moses cried to the LORD about the frogs, as he had agreed with Pharaoh. ¹³ And the LORD did according to the word of Moses. The frogs died out in the houses, the courtyards, and the fields. ¹⁴ And they gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank. ¹⁵ But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart and would not listen to them, as the LORD had said. ¹⁶ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the earth, so that it may become gnats in all the land of Egypt.' " ¹⁷ And they did so. Aaron stretched out his hand with his staff and struck the dust of the earth, and there were gnats on man and beast. All the dust of the earth became gnats in all the land of Egypt. ¹⁸ The magicians tried by their secret arts to produce gnats, but they could not. So there were gnats on man and beast. ¹⁹ Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

We have a knowledge problem and ask "Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice"?

1. Every one of us will eventually know that the Lord is God.

Here's a truth: at the end of all things, every single one of us will bow the knee to King Jesus, and you will either bow the knee thanking him for saving your soul and bringing you into his family, or you will bow the knee when its too late. God has been patient to wait for you and I to come in, but we should not count his patience as slowness.

a. Pharaoh was to be made know that the Lord is God through a series of signs and wonders.

Now, there are a number of ways to preach about the plagues, including talking about how each of the plagues are a particular polemic against an Egyptian god; a socio-spacial approach to talk about where or what the plagues are about (five pairs).

There is good textual evidence to preach the plagues as three triads with the death of the first born being the final sign.

At the heart of this first triad is the announcement that Pharaoh will know that the Lord is God: Exodus 7:17 “Thus says the Lord, “By this you shall know that I am the Lord”

b. First Plague: Water to Blood. Know that God is the Lord over our socio-economic systems (7:14-25)

It is almost impossible to overemphasize how central the Nile River was to life in ancient Egypt—both in how it shaped the Egyptian nation and self-identity. The closest approximate could be Wild West in American folklore.

c. Second Plague: Swarms of Frogs. Know that God is Lord over all of our idols (8:1-15)

Again at the center of this is knowing God: Exodus 8:10 “10 And he said, “Tomorrow.” Moses said, “Be it as you say, so that you may know that there is no one like the Lord our God.”

The frog was also a fertility symbol within Egyptian religion. While unclean to the Israelites, they could not be killed in ancient Egypt. It was ironic that the Lord multiplied the symbol of fertility to the point that their false God became a nuisance to be despised.

Don't be fooled by Pharaoh either: he is not asking for God to take his hard-heartedness away: he was to be free of the consequences.

Third Plague: Clouds of Mosquitos/Gnats/Lice. Know that God is Lord over all creation (8:16-19)

Many people believe in God without ever coming to him for salvation. In fact, if the surveys are correct, *most* people believe in God. They acknowledge the existence of a Creator. They confess their need for “a Higher Power.” They speak of “the Man Upstairs.” When there is a natural disaster, they refer to it as “an act of God.”¹

2. Our unwillingness to respond to clear evidence that the Lord is God causes us to harden our hearts.

Exodus 7:14-8:19 showcases God's absolute control over nature and nations. The plagues are not just random disasters; they are targeted judgments against the gods of Egypt, demonstrating God's supremacy.

Connection to Christ: In the New Testament, we are warned against hardening our hearts (Hebrews 3:7-8). Christ comes to soften our hearts, offering a way out of spiritual stubbornness through repentance and faith (Ezekiel 36:26)

3. In spite of hardness of heart, God, does reveal himself in speech and deed.

Even in His judgments, God's purpose is redemptive. The plagues are incremental, allowing opportunities for repentance. They are also instructive, revealing God to both Egypt and Israel.

¹ Philip Graham Ryken and R. Kent Hughes, *Exodus: Saved for God's Glory* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2005), 244

The links between Egyptian plagues and the images of Revelation tell us that what happened in Egypt here is not the only time that people who plead with folks to repent are going to be met with mercy.

God will always save us from our worse tenancies by putting his finger on things we love more than him often at great personal pain.

4. Christ softens our hardness by showing us God's heart.

Luke 11:14–23 ESV

¹⁴ Now he was casting out a demon that was mute. When the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke, and the people marveled. ¹⁵ But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons," ¹⁶ while others, to test him, kept seeking from him a sign from heaven. ¹⁷ But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls. ¹⁸ And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. ¹⁹ And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. ²⁰ But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. ²¹ When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are safe; ²² but when one stronger than he attacks him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted and divides his spoil. ²³ Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.

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² While Peter Enn's *Exodus* commentary is still one of the best in print and widely recommended, he has since apostatized from the faith. Almost nothing published after 2004 should be consulted as an orthodox resource.