

Exodus 09 - 5th Plague: Murrain on Cattle; 6th Plague: Boils; God Hardens Pharaoh's Heart; 7th Plague: Hail

I. Exodus from Egyptian bondage: Israel's redemption, liberation, and preservation (Ex 1:1—18:27)

(1) Redemption from Egypt (Ex 1:1—12:30)

(C) God's sovereignty over Pharaoh and the Egyptian pantheon (Ex 5:1—12:30)

(d) 10 plagues (Ex 7:14—12:30)

(v) Death of livestock (9:1-7)

(vi) Boils (9:8-12)

(vii) Hail (9:13-35)

Exodus 9

(v) Death of livestock (9:1-7)

1 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and speak to him, 'This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews says: "Let My people go, so that they may serve Me.

1 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.

1 Then the LORD told Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and say to him, 'This is what the LORD God of the Hebrews says: "Let my people go so they may serve¹ me.

1 Then the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh, and tell him, Thus saith the LORD 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,

2 For if you refuse to let *them* go and continue to hold them,

2 But if you refuse to let them go and continue to hold them,

2 For if thou refuse to let them go, and wilt hold them still,

3 behold, the hand of the LORD will come *with* a very severe plague on your livestock which are in the field, on the horses, on the donkeys, on the camels, on the herds, and on the flocks.

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.

3 then the hand of the LORD will come with a very severe plague on your livestock in the fields, on horses, on donkeys, on camels, on cattle, and on sheep.

3 Behold, the hand of the LORD is upon thy cattle which is in the field, upon the horses, upon the asses, upon the camels, upon the oxen, and upon the sheep: there shall be a very grievous **murrain**.

- "...murrain" [KJV] - a general name for infectious diseases that affect cattle or other animals

- All of the previous plagues caused irritation or pain to their bodies, but now God begins to reduce their wealth and prosperity

— This is the first plague that directly caused death

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.""

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.""

4 The LORD will distinguish between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of the Egyptians, so that nothing that belongs to the Israelis will die.""

4 And the LORD shall sever between the cattle of Israel and the cattle of Egypt: and there shall nothing die of all that is the children's of Israel.

- Again, as in the fourth plague, God excludes the Israelites from any effects from this plague

5 And the LORD set a definite time, saying, "Tomorrow the LORD will do this thing in the land."

5 The LORD set a definite time, saying, "Tomorrow the LORD will do this thing in the land."

5 The LORD set the time: "Tomorrow the LORD will do this thing in the land."

5 And the LORD appointed a set time, saying, To morrow the LORD shall 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 not one of the livestock of the sons of Israel died.

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.

6 The LORD did this thing the next day, and all the livestock of the Egyptians died. But not one of the livestock died that belonged to the Israelis.

6 And the LORD did that thing on the morrow, and all the cattle of Egypt died: but of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one.

- "...all the livestock of Egypt" - must refer only to the Egyptian farm animals in the fields; some cattle obviously survived this plague (Cf. v19,20,22)

7 And Pharaoh sent *men*, and *they learned that*, behold, not even one of the livestock of Israel was dead. But **the heart of Pharaoh was hardened**, and he did not let the people go.

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.

7 Then Pharaoh inquired and discovered that not a single one of the livestock of Israel had died, but Pharaoh's heart was stubborn and he would not let the people go.

7 And Pharaoh sent, and, behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.

- In this plague, the second in which the Israelites were immune, was confirmed by Pharaoh

- "...the heart of Pharaoh was hardened" - see notes on 4:21

Murrain: The Plague on the Animals

The fifth plague was against the domestic animals of Egypt, and thus Apis, the bull god, and the cow-headed Hathor, goddess of the deserts. These were so widespread that even the children of Israel had become tainted by their worship, which led to the fiasco of the golden calf in the image of Apis (Ex 32:4).

The plague was a "murrain" a contagious disease among the cattle, and even the sacred bulls in the temple died (Ex 9:3-7). Other domestic animals were sacred also, and their images adorned many of the idols, such as Bubastis, the cat goddess of love, feminine matters and fashion, etc. The cattle of the Hebrews, of course, were not touched.

(vi) Boils (9:8-12)

8 Then the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Take for yourselves handfuls of soot from a **kiln**, and Moses shall toss it toward the sky in the sight of Pharaoh.

8 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.

8 Then the LORD told Moses and Aaron, "Take handfuls of soot from a kiln, and let Moses throw it into the air in front of Pharaoh.

8 And the LORD said unto Moses and unto Aaron, Take to you handfuls of ashes of the furnace, and let Moses sprinkle it toward the heaven in the sight of Pharaoh.

- In the 6th plague, as in the 3rd and 9th, God gives Pharaoh no warning...

- "...kiln" - likely one of the furnaces in which the Israelites baked bricks for Pharaoh as his slaves

— These "furnaces" became a symbol of Israel's slavery (Cf. Deut 4:20; 1 Kings 8:51; Jer 11:4)

— In this plague, God converted the suffering of the Israelites in the "furnace" of Egypt so that the soot in the literal furnaces became a source of suffering for the Egyptians

9 Then it will become fine dust over all the land of Egypt, and will turn into boils breaking out with sores on every person and animal through all the land of Egypt."

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."

9 The soot will become dust over the entire land of Egypt, and it will become boils erupting into sores on people and animals throughout the land of Egypt."

9 And it shall become small dust in all the land of Egypt, and shall be a boil breaking forth with blains upon man, and upon beast, throughout all the land of Egypt.

10 So they took soot from a kiln, and stood before Pharaoh; and Moses tossed it toward the sky, and it became boils breaking out with sores on every person and animal.

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.

10 So they took soot from the kiln and stood before Pharaoh. Then Moses threw it into the air, and it became boils producing running sores on people and animals.

10 And they took ashes of the furnace, and stood before Pharaoh; and Moses sprinkled it up toward heaven; and it became a boil breaking forth with blains upon man, and upon beast.

11 The soothsayer priests could not stand before Moses because of the boils, for the boils were on the soothsayer priests as well as on all the Egyptians.

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.

11 The magicians were not able to stand before Moses because of the boils, because the boils were on the magicians and on all the Egyptians.

11 And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils; for the boil was upon the magicians, and upon all the Egyptians.

- The soothsayer priests and magicians, Egypt's best educated and most skilled in the secret arts, could no longer resist Moses and his God

— This plague may have been the first to cause Egyptians to fear for their lives

12 But **the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart**, and he did not listen to them, just as the LORD had spoken to Moses.

12 And the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not listen to them, just as the LORD had spoken to Moses.

12 The LORD made Pharaoh's heart stubborn so that he would not listen to them, just as the LORD had told Moses.

12 And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had spoken unto Moses.

- "...the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart" - this is the first time we read that the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart

— The text has stated that Pharaoh has previously hardened his own heart 7x (7:13,14,22; 8:15,19,32; 9:7)

— Pharaoh expressed his moral rebellion and lost human condition when he hardened his own heart in the face of the displays of divine power (Ex 8:15,19,32). Thus, when God willed to harden Pharaoh, He simply confirmed Pharaoh in his unbelief and allowed him to suffer the consequences of his sinful choices (Cf. Rom 9:15-18).

— The lesson here is that if a person continues to ignore the prompting of the Lord time and time again, and harden his own heart, God will then harden it further in judgment and make repentance and belief impossible (Cf. Rom 1:18-32)

Boils

The sixth wonder was manifested against the bodies of men. The plague of *shechiyn*, translated "boils" (Ex 9:8-11), may hide something more terrible. The root means "burning" and the same word can be translated as leprosy, (Lev 13:18-20) and as the Egyptian botch (Deut 28:27,35), which was declared to be incurable. Among the gods to which cures would have been ascribed were Thoth, the ibis-headed god of intelligence and medical learning, and Apis, Serapis and Imhotep.

Here even the magicians did not escape and could not carry on their priestly functions. It was their custom to take the ashes of human sacrifices and cast them into the air. Borne by the wind over the milling populace, they were viewed as a blessing.

(vii) Hail (9:13-35)

13 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Rise up early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh and say to him, 'This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews says: "Let My people go, so that they may serve Me.

13 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Rise up early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me.

13 Then the LORD told Moses, "Get up early in the morning, present yourself to Pharaoh, and say to him, 'This is what the LORD God of the Hebrews says: "Let my people go so

they may serve me.

13 And the LORD said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me.

14 For this time I am going to send all My plagues on you and your servants and your people, so that you may know that there is no one like Me in all the earth.

14 For this time I will send all My plagues on you and your servants and your people, so that you may know that there is no one like Me in all the earth.

14 Indeed, this time I'm sending all my plagues against you, your officials, and your people, so you may know that there is no one like me in all the earth.

14 For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth.

15 For had I now put out My hand and struck you and your people with plague, you would then have been eliminated from the earth.

15 For *if by* now I had put forth My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, you would then have been cut off from the earth.

15 Indeed, by now I could have sent forth my hand and struck you and your people with a plague, and you would have been destroyed from the earth.

15 For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth.

- The plagues upon Egypt were an act of mercy and long-suffering on God's part: the Lord could've destroyed Pharaoh and his people in a moment, but He did not. He would have brought each plague without warning, but in most cases He served ample notice (Cf. 7:16).
— In anticipation of this plague, He warned the Egyptians to gather their livestock so they might be spared in the coming hailstorm (v19)

16 But indeed, for this reason I have allowed you to remain, in order to show you My power and in order to proclaim My name throughout the earth.

16 But, indeed, for this reason I have allowed you to remain, in order to show you My power and in order to proclaim My name through all the earth.

16 However, I've kept you standing in order to show you my power and to declare my name in all the earth.

16 And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.

- Paul quotes this verse in Rom 9:17 (see notes there; see also [Divine Hardening of the Heart](#))

- 17 Still you exalt yourself against My people by not letting them go.
17 Still you exalt yourself against My people by not letting them go.
17 You are still acting arrogantly against my people by not letting them go.
17 As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt not let them go?

18 Behold, about this time tomorrow, I will send a very heavy hail, such as has not been seen in Egypt from the day it was founded until now.

18 Behold, about this time tomorrow, I will send a very heavy hail, such as has not been seen in Egypt from the day it was founded until now.

18 Look! About this time tomorrow, I'll send a severe hail storm, such as has not happened in Egypt from the day it was founded until now.

18 Behold, to morrow about this time I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation thereof even until now.

19 So now, send *word*, bring your livestock and whatever you have in the field to safety. Every person and animal that is found in the field and is not brought home, when the hail comes down on them, will die."''

19 Now therefore send, bring your livestock and whatever you have in the field to safety. Every man and beast that is found in the field and is not brought home, when the hail comes down on them, will die."''

19 So send for your livestock and everything that belongs to you that's out in the field, because every person and animal found in the field that has not been brought inside to shelters will die when the hail comes down on them."''

19 Send therefore now, and gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast in the field; for upon every man and beast which shall be found in the field, and shall not be brought home, the hail shall come down upon them, and they shall die.

20 *Everyone* among the servants of Pharaoh who feared the word of the LORD hurried to bring his servants and his livestock into the houses;

20 The one among the servants of Pharaoh who feared the word of the LORD made his servants and his livestock flee into the houses;

20 Whoever feared the message from the LORD among Pharaoh's officials made his servants and livestock flee into shelters.

20 He that feared the word of the LORD among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses:

21 but *everyone* who did not pay regard to the word of the LORD left his servants and his livestock in the field.

21 but he who paid no regard to the word of the LORD left his servants and his livestock in the field.

21 But whoever did not pay attention to the message from the LORD left his servants and his livestock outside in the fields.

21 And he that regarded not the word of the LORD left his servants and his cattle in the field.

22 Now the LORD said to Moses, "Reach out with your hand toward the sky, so that hail may fall on all the land of Egypt, on *every* person and animal, and on every plant of the field, throughout the land of Egypt."

22 Now the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky, that hail may fall on all the land of Egypt, on man and on beast and on every plant of the field, throughout the land of Egypt."

22 Then the LORD told Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, and there will be hail in all the land of Egypt, on people, animals, and all the vegetation of the field throughout the land of Egypt."

22 And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch forth thine hand toward heaven, that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt, upon man, and upon beast, and upon every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt.

23 So Moses reached out with his staff toward the sky, and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire ran *down* to the earth. And the LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt.

23 Moses stretched out his staff toward the sky, and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire ran down to the earth. And the LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt.

23 When Moses stretched out his staff toward heaven, the LORD sent thunder and hail, and lightning struck the earth. The LORD rained hail, and lightning struck the earth. The LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt.

23 And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; and the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt.

24 So there was hail, and fire flashing intermittently in the midst of the hail, *which was* very heavy, such as had not occurred in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.

24 So there was hail, and fire flashing continually in the midst of the hail, very severe, such as had not been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.

24 There was very heavy hail, and lightning was flashing continuously in the midst of the hail. There had not been anything like it in the land of Egypt since it had become a nation.

24 So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.

25 The hail struck everything that was in the field through all the land of Egypt, from people to animals; the hail also struck every plant of the field, and shattered every tree of the field.

25 The hail struck all that was in the field through all the land of Egypt, both man and beast; the hail also struck every plant of the field and shattered every tree of the field.

25 The hail struck everything, including people and animals, outside in the fields throughout the land of Egypt. The hail struck all the vegetation of the fields and shattered all the trees in the orchards.

25 And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field.

26 Only in the land of Goshen, where the sons of Israel *were*, was there no hail.

26 Only in the land of Goshen, where the sons of Israel *were*, there was no hail.

26 Only in the land of Goshen, where the Israelis were, was there no hail.

26 Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, was there no hail.

27 Then Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "I have sinned this time; the LORD is the righteous one, and I and my people are the wicked ones.

27 Then Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "I have sinned this time; the LORD is the righteous one, and I and my people are the wicked ones.

27 Pharaoh sent word and called for Moses and Aaron. "I've sinned this time," he told them. "The LORD is righteous, but I and my people are wicked.

27 And Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time: the LORD is righteous, and I and my people are wicked.

- Pharaoh's repentance was shallow, even though his words sounded sincere

— He acknowledged his mistake and unfairness, but did not repent against his arrogance against *Yahweh* and submit to His sovereignty

— He did, however, admit that *Yahweh* was "the righteous One"; Pharaoh is the first person in Scripture to verbalize that God is righteous

28 Plead with the LORD, for there has been enough of God's thunder and hail; and I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer."

28 Make supplication to the LORD, for there has been enough of God's thunder and hail; and I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer."

28 Pray to the LORD! There has been enough of God's thunder and hail! I'll let you go, and you need not stay any longer."

28 Intreat the LORD (for it is enough) that there be no more mighty thunderings and hail; and I will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer.

29 Moses said to him, "As soon as I go out of the city, I will spread out my hands to the LORD; the thunder will cease and there will no longer be hail, so that you may know that the earth is the LORD'S.

29 Moses said to him, "As soon as I go out of the city, I will spread out my hands to the LORD; the thunder will cease and there will be hail no longer, that you may know that the earth is the LORD's.

29 Moses told him, "When I leave the city I'll spread out my hands to the LORD. The thunder will cease and the hail won't continue, so that you may know that the earth belongs to the LORD.

29 And Moses said unto him, As soon as I am gone out of the city, I will spread abroad my hands unto the LORD; and the thunder shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; that thou mayest know how that the earth is the LORD'S.

30 But as for you and your servants, I know that you do not yet fear the LORD God."

30 But as for you and your servants, I know that you do not yet fear the LORD God."

30 But as for you and your officials, I know that you don't yet fear the LORD God."

30 But as for thee and thy servants, I know that ye will not yet fear the LORD God.

- Although Pharaoh's words of sorrow (v27) sounded good, Moses knew that Pharaoh had not yet believed that *Yahweh* was sovereign

31 (Now the **flax** and the **barley** were ruined, for the barley was in the ear and the flax was in bud.

31 (Now the flax and the barley were ruined, for the barley was in the ear and the flax was in bud.

31 (Now the flax and the barley were ruined because the barley was in ear and the flax was in bud.

31 And the flax and the barley was smitten: for the barley was in the ear, and the flax was bolled.

- "...flax" - the Egyptians used flax to make linen cloth, which they preferred over wool for their clothing

— The Egyptian priests, in particular, dressed in linen, though other Egyptians also wore linen garments. Thus, this plague was a special judgment on the priests.

- "...barley" - used by the Egyptians to make beer and as feed for livestock; poorer Egyptians also ate it
— Both flax and barley are in bud in late January/early February, which enables us to identify the time of year when this plague occurred

32 But the wheat and the spelt were not ruined, for they *ripen* late.)
32 But the wheat and the spelt were not ruined, for they *ripen* late.)
32 The wheat and the wild grain were not ruined because they were late crops.)
32 But the wheat and the rye were not smitten: for they were not grown up.

33 So Moses left the city from *his meeting* with Pharaoh, and spread out his hands to the LORD; and the thunder and the hail stopped, and rain no longer poured on the earth.
33 So Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh, and spread out his hands to the LORD; and the thunder and the hail ceased, and rain no longer poured on the earth.
33 Then Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh and spread out his hands to the LORD. The thunder and hail stopped, and the rain no longer poured out on the land.
33 And Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh, and spread abroad his hands unto the LORD: and the thunders and hail ceased, and the rain was not poured upon the earth.

34 But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had stopped, he **sinned again and hardened his heart**, he and his servants.
34 But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he sinned again and hardened his heart, he and his servants.
34 When Pharaoh saw that the rain, hail, and thunder had stopped, he continued to sin. He, along with his officials, hardened his heart.
34 And when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants.
- "...sinned again and hardened his heart" - see notes on 4:21; 9:12

35 So **Pharaoh's heart was hardened**, and he did not let the sons of Israel go, just as the LORD had spoken through Moses.
35 Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he did not let the sons of Israel go, just as the LORD had spoken through Moses.
35 Pharaoh's heart was stubborn, and he did not let the Israelis go, just as the LORD had said through Moses.
35 And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, neither would he let the children of Israel go; as the LORD had spoken by Moses.
- "...Pharaoh's heart was hardened" - see notes on 4:21; 9:12

Hail

What would the worshippers of Nut have thought when they looked skyward not to see the blessings of the sun and warmth, but the tragedy of storm and violence. Nut was the sky goddess. It was from her domain that this tragedy originated. One reflects upon the responsibilities of both Isis and Seth who also had responsibilities relating to agricultural crops. The black and burned fields of flax were a silent testimony to the impotence and incapability of wooden and stone deities.