

# Exodus 10 - 8th Plague: Locusts; 9th Plague: Darkness

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)

(viii) Locusts (10:1-20)

(ix) Darkness (10:21-29)

## Exodus 10

(viii) Locusts (10:1-20)

1 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh, for **I have hardened his heart** and the heart of his servants, so that I may perform these signs of Mine among them,

1 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that I may perform these signs of Mine among them,

1 Then the LORD told Moses, "Go to Pharaoh, for I've hardened his heart and the hearts of his officials in order to perform these signs of mine among them,

1 And the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs before him:

- "...I have hardened his heart" - see note on Ex 4:12; 9:12 (Cf. 10:20,27; Rom 9:15-18)

2 and that you may tell in the presence of your son, and of your grandson, how I made a mockery of the Egyptians and how I performed My signs among them, so that you may know that I am the LORD."

2 and that you may tell in the hearing of your son, and of your grandson, how I made a mockery of the Egyptians and how I performed My signs among them, that you may know that I am the LORD."

2 so you may tell your children and your grandchildren how I toyed with the Egyptians and about my miraculous signs that I performed among them, so all of you may know that I am the LORD.

2 And that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; that ye may know how that I am the LORD.

- Another purpose of God in sending further plagues is so the Israelites in future generations would believe in the sovereignty of *Yahweh*  
— The phrase "that you (or they) may know that I am the LORD" occurs many times in the OT. It means that people will come to acknowledge God for who He is and respond appropriately to Him.

**3** So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him, "This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews says: 'How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Let My people go, so that they may serve Me.

**3** Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him, "Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, 'How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Let My people go, that they may serve Me.

**3** Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and told him, "This is what the LORD God of the Hebrews says: 'How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go, so they may serve me.

**3** And Moses and Aaron came in unto Pharaoh, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me? let my people go, that they may serve me.

- Those who refuse to humble themselves before God will be humbled by God

4 For if you refuse to let My people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring locusts into your territory.

4 For if you refuse to let My people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring locusts into your territory.

4 But if you refuse to let my people go, tomorrow I'm going to bring locusts into your territory.

4 Else, if thou refuse to let my people go, behold, to morrow will I bring the locusts into thy coast:

5 And they will cover the surface of the land, so that no one will be able to see the land. They will also **eat the rest of what has survived**—what is left to you from the hail—and they will eat every tree of yours which grows in the field.

5 They shall cover the surface of the land, so that no one will be able to see the land. They will also eat the rest of what has escaped—what is left to you from the hail—and they will eat every tree which sprouts for you out of the field.

5 They'll cover the surface of the land so a person cannot see the ground, and they'll eat what is left for you of the residue from the hail. They'll also eat all your trees that grow in the orchards.

5 And they shall cover the face of the earth, that one cannot be able to see the earth: and they shall eat the residue of that which is escaped, which remaineth unto you from the hail, and shall eat every tree which groweth for you out of the field:

- "...eat the rest of what has survived" - God mercifully spared the the "wheat" and the "spelt" (wild grain) when He sent the hail (9:32), but the locusts would take care of that if Pharaoh didn't repent

6 Then your houses will be filled *with them*, together with the houses of all your servants and the houses of all the Egyptians, *something* which neither your fathers nor your grandfathers have seen, from the day that they came upon the earth until this day.'" And he turned and left Pharaoh.

6 Then your houses shall be filled and the houses of all your servants and the houses of all the Egyptians, *something* which neither your fathers nor your grandfathers have seen, from the day that they came upon the earth until this day.'" And he turned and went out from Pharaoh.

6 Your houses will be filled, along with the houses of all your officials and the houses of all the Egyptians—something that neither your fathers nor your ancestors ever saw from the time they were on earth until now.'" Then Moses turned and left Pharaoh's presence.

6 And they shall fill thy houses, and the houses of all thy servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians; which neither thy fathers, nor thy fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were upon the earth unto this day. And he turned himself, and went out from Pharaoh.

7 Then Pharaoh's servants said to him, "How long shall this man be a snare to us? Let the people go, so that they may serve the LORD their God. Do you not yet realize that Egypt is destroyed?"

7 Pharaoh's servants said to him, "How long will this man be a snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their God. Do you not realize that Egypt is destroyed?"

7 Then the officials of Pharaoh told him, "How long will this man be a snare to us? Let the people go so they may serve the LORD their God! Don't you realize yet that Egypt is about to be destroyed?"

7 And Pharaoh's servants said unto him, How long shall this man be a snare unto us? let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their God: knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?

- Pharaoh's servants seem ready and willing to acknowledge Yahweh as a god ("the LORD their God"), but for Pharaoh, this conflict had greater significance: it was a test of sovereignty

— The advice of the servants reflects their extreme distress; it also fulfilled God's prediction that the Egyptians would acknowledge His sovereignty (7:5; Cf. 8:19; 9:20; 12:33)

— Pharaoh's magicians had failed him (8:19) and now his servants turned against him

8 So Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh, and he said to them, "Go, serve the LORD your God! Who specifically are the ones who are going?"

8 So Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh, and he said to them, "Go, serve the LORD your God! Who are the ones that are going?"

8 Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh and he told them, "Go, serve the LORD your God. But exactly who will go?"

**8** And Moses and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh: and he said unto them, Go, serve the LORD your God: but who are they that shall go?

- Pharaoh's gave tacit permission for the Israelites to go worship God, but asked specifically who (which ones) of the Hebrews would go

9 Moses said, "We shall go with our young and our old; with our sons and our daughters, with our flocks and our herds we shall go, for we must hold a feast to the LORD."

9 Moses said, "We shall go with our young and our old; with our sons and our daughters, with our flocks and our herds we shall go, for we must hold a feast to the LORD."

9 Moses said, "We will go with our young and with our old. We will go with our sons and our daughters, with our sheep and our cattle, because it's a festival to the LORD for us."

**9** And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we must hold a feast unto the LORD.

- Moses replied: everyone, all the Hebrews, young and old, parents and children, entire families

10 Then he said to them, "So may the LORD be with you, when I let you and your little ones go! Watch out, for evil is on your mind!

10 Then he said to them, "Thus may the LORD be with you, if ever I let you and your little ones go! Take heed, for evil is in your mind.

10 Then Pharaoh told them, "The LORD will certainly be with you if I let you and your little ones go. I know some evil plan is in your mind.

**10** And he said unto them, Let the LORD be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: look to it; for evil is before you.

- Pharaoh says: No way!

11 Not so! Go now, *but only* the men *among you*, and serve the LORD, since that is what you desire." So they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.

11 Not so! Go now, the men *among you*, and serve the LORD, for that is what you desire." So they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.

11 No! Let the men go and serve the LORD, for that is what you were seeking." Then they were driven out from the presence of Pharaoh.

11 Not so: go now ye that are men, and serve the LORD; for that ye did desire. And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.

- Pharaoh only allowed the men to go to worship; the women and children must stay behind in Egypt

Pharaoh has offered Moses three compromises, which the world still offers Christians today:

1. He suggested that the Israelites stay in Egypt and worship (8:25). He said, in effect: you can be who you are, but live as part of your larger culture; do not be distinctive
2. He permitted them to leave Egypt, but not go too far (8:28). He allowed them to separate from the Egyptian culture, but not drastically.
3. He gave permission for the males to leave, but the women and children remain (10:8-11). Even godly parents are sometimes inclined to desire prosperity and worldly position for their children.

*Wanting the "best" of the world for their children is the most subtle temptation that can come to Christian parents. [J.V. Mcgee]*

**12** Then the LORD said to Moses, "Reach out with your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, so that they may come up on the land of Egypt and eat every plant of the land, everything that the hail has left."

**12** Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come up on the land of Egypt and eat every plant of the land, *even* all that the hail has left."

**12** The LORD told Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt to bring the locusts, and they'll come up over the land of Egypt and eat all the vegetation of the land, everything that the hail left."

**12** And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come up upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land, even all that the hail hath left.

13 So Moses reached out with his staff over the land of Egypt, and the LORD directed an east wind on the land all that day and all that night; and when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts.

13 So Moses stretched out his staff over the land of Egypt, and the LORD directed an east wind on the land all that day and all that night; and when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts.

13 Moses stretched out his staff over the land of Egypt, and the LORD sent an east wind into the land all that day and throughout the night. When morning came, the east wind brought the locusts.

13 And Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind upon the land all that day, and all that night; and when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts.

14 The locusts came up over all the land of Egypt and settled in all the territory of Egypt; *they were* very numerous. There had never been so *many* locusts, nor would there be so *many* again.

14 The locusts came up over all the land of Egypt and settled in all the territory of Egypt; *they were* very numerous. There had never been so *many* locusts, nor would there be so *many* again.

14 The locusts came up over all the land of Egypt and settled on all the territory of Egypt in great swarms. There had never been locusts like this before nor would there ever be again.

14 And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the coasts of Egypt: very grievous were they; before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such.

15 For they covered the surface of the whole land, so that the land was darkened; and they **ate every plant of the land** and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left. Therefore nothing green was left on tree or plant of the field throughout the land of Egypt.

15 For they covered the surface of the whole land, so that the land was darkened; and they ate every plant of the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left. Thus nothing green was left on tree or plant of the field through all the land of Egypt.

15 They covered the surface of the entire land so that it was dark. They ate all the vegetation of the land and the fruit from the trees that the hail left. Nothing green was left on the trees or on the vegetation in all the land of Egypt.

15 For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left: and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land of Egypt.

- "...ate every plant of the land" - Joseph had delivered Egypt *from* starvation, now Moses brought them *to* starvation

— Both effects were the result of official Egyptian policy toward Abraham's descendants (Gen 12:3)

16 Then Pharaoh hurriedly called for Moses and Aaron, and he said, "I have sinned against the LORD your God and against you.

16 Then Pharaoh hurriedly called for Moses and Aaron, and he said, "I have sinned against the LORD your God and against you.

16 Pharaoh quickly called Moses and Aaron and said, "I've sinned against the LORD your God and against you.

**16** Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste; and he said, I have sinned against the LORD your God, and against you.

17 So now, please forgive my sin only this once, and plead with the LORD your God, that He would only remove this death from me."

17 Now therefore, please forgive my sin only this once, and make supplication to the LORD your God, that He would only remove this death from me."

17 Now, please forgive my sin only this time, and pray to the LORD your God that he would at least remove this from me."

17 Now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once, and intreat the LORD your God, that he may take away from me this death only.

- Pharaoh's confession of sin and request for forgiveness here appears to be more genuine than his previous one (v16; Cf. 9:27)

18 Then he left Pharaoh and pleaded with the LORD.

18 He went out from Pharaoh and made supplication to the LORD.

18 Moses left Pharaoh and prayed to the LORD.

18 And he went out from Pharaoh, and intreated the LORD.

19 So the LORD shifted *the wind* to a very strong west wind, which picked up the locusts and drove them into the Red Sea; not one locust was left in all the territory of Egypt.

19 So the LORD shifted *the wind* to a very strong west wind which took up the locusts and drove them into the Red Sea; not one locust was left in all the territory of Egypt.

19 Then the LORD brought a very strong west wind that took the locusts and drove them into the Reed Sea. Not one locust remained in all the territory of Egypt.

19 And the LORD turned a mighty strong west wind, which took away the locusts, and cast them into the Red sea; there remained not one locust in all the coasts of Egypt.

- The locusts perished in the Red Sea, as did the Egyptian soldiers later (14:28)

20 But **the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart**, and he did not let the sons of Israel go.

20 But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the sons of Israel go.

20 But the LORD made Pharaoh's heart stubborn and he would not let the Israelis go.

20 But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go.

- "...the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart" - see note on Ex 4:21; 9:12 (Cf. 10:1,27; Rom 9:15-18)

### **Locusts**

Some of the earlier plagues may have been separated by extended intervals, but the eighth plague followed immediately on the heels of the seventh: locusts came upon the land. Every twig and leaf that had somehow escaped the hail and fire was now taken by the locusts.

Where was Nepri, the grain god? Where was Ermutet, goddess of childbirth and crops? Where was Anubis, the jackal-headed guardian of the fields? And where was Osiris, great head of their senior trinity who was also their agricultural god? Having lost faith in their gods, rebellion was now in the air (Ex 10:7).

#### (ix) Darkness (10:21-29)

**21** Then the LORD said to Moses, "Reach out with your hand toward the sky, so that there may be **darkness** over the land of Egypt, even a darkness which may be felt."

**21** Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even a darkness which may be felt."

**21** Then the LORD told Moses, "Stretch your hand toward the sky and there will be darkness over the land of Egypt, a darkness that one can feel."

**21** And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt.

- Many commentators believe that many of the plagues thus far are natural phenomena that are heightened in their intensity and controlled in their timing, by God

— Many interpret this plague in the same way, relegating it to a huge dust storm that blackened the sun in all of Egypt for three days, but left the land of Goshen with natural light (v23)

- "...darkness" - a 'chaos' word as well as a symbol of death (Cf. 1 Sam 2:9; Job 15:30; 17:13; 18:18; Ps 88:12,18; 143:3)

— Darkness was the first thing God brought under control by introducing light (Gen 1:3)

22 So Moses reached out with his hand toward the sky, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days.

22 So Moses stretched out his hand toward the sky, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days.

22 So Moses stretched his hand toward the sky, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days.

22 And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days:

23 They did not see one another, nor did anyone rise from his place for three days, but all the sons of Israel had light in their dwellings.

23 They did not see one another, nor did anyone rise from his place for three days, but all the sons of Israel had light in their dwellings.

23 No one could see anyone else, nor could anyone get up from his place for three days. But there was light for all the Israelites in their dwellings.

23 They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

24 Then Pharaoh called for Moses, and said, "Go, serve the LORD; only let your flocks and your herds be left behind. Even your little ones may go with you."

24 Then Pharaoh called to Moses, and said, "Go, serve the LORD; only let your flocks and your herds be detained. Even your little ones may go with you."

24 Pharaoh called Moses and said, "Go serve the LORD, but your flocks and your cattle are to remain. Even your little ones can go with you!"

**24** And Pharaoh called unto Moses, and said, Go ye, serve the LORD; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed: let your little ones also go with you.

- Pharaoh's fourth compromise offered to Moses was for the people to go, but leave the flocks and herds behind

— Many believers have escaped the enslavement of the world, but still have treasure there (Cf. Matt 6:19-20)

— Had Moses accepted this compromise, many of the Israelites would have wanted to return to Egypt after the Exodus to retrieve their possessions

25 But Moses said, "You must also let us have sacrifices and burnt offerings, so that we may sacrifice *them* to the LORD our God.

25 But Moses said, "You must also let us have sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice *them* to the LORD our God.

25 Moses said, "You must let us have sacrifices and burnt offerings to offer to the LORD our God.

**25** And Moses said, Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the LORD our God.

26 Therefore, our livestock too shall go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind, for we shall take some of them to serve the LORD our God. And until we arrive there, we ourselves do not know with what we shall serve the LORD."

26 Therefore, our livestock too shall go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind, for we shall take some of them to serve the LORD our God. And until we arrive there, we ourselves do not know with what we shall serve the LORD."

26 And even our livestock must go with us. Not a hoof will be left behind because we will use some of them to serve the LORD our God, and until we get there we won't know what we need to serve the LORD."

26 Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind; for thereof must we take to serve the LORD our God; and we know not with what we must serve the LORD, until we come thither.

27 But **the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart**, and he was not willing to let them go.

27 But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he was not willing to let them go.

27 The LORD made Pharaoh's heart stubborn, and he did not want to let them go.

**27** But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go.

- "...the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart" - see note on Ex 4:21; 9:12 (Cf. 10:1,20; Rom 9:15-18)

— This is the first time God hardened Pharaoh's heart during the negotiations; until now, God has made Pharaoh stubborn after he had agreed to Moses' demands, after the plague had ceased, and before Moses could leave with the Israelites

28 Then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me! Be careful, do not see my face again, for on the day you see my face, you shall die!"

28 Then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me! Beware, do not see my face again, for in the day you see my face you shall die!"

28 Then Pharaoh told him, "Get away from me! Watch out that you never see my face again, because on the day you see my face, you will die!"

28 And Pharaoh said unto him, Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die.

- The first time Pharaoh threatened Moses

— Because of this, the 10th plague (death of the firstborn) followed

— By expelling Moses from his presence, Pharaoh was effectively excluding God from his presence

29 Moses said, "You have spoken correctly; I shall never see your face again!"

29 Moses said, "You are right; I shall never see your face again!"

29 Moses said, "Just as you have said, I won't see your face again!"

**29** And Moses said, Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more.

- Look at 12:12 because it will help you understand the nine plagues which we just read.

God is judging the gods of Egypt, the plagues are really a chronicle of the gods they worshiped

### **Thick Darkness**

In the light of Egyptian theology and practice, this [ninth]plague was very significant. To a large degree it struck at the very heart of Egyptian worship and humbled one of Egypt's greatest gods. The sun god Re was considered one of the great blessings in the land of Egypt. His faithfulness in providing the warmth and light of sun day after day without fail caused them to express great joy over the faithfulness of this deity.

Josephus writes: *But when Moses said that what he [Pharaoh] desired was unjust, since they were obliged to offer sacrifices to God of those cattle, and the time being prolonged on this account, a thick darkness, without the least light, spread itself over the Egyptians, whereby their sight being obstructed, and their breathing hindered by the thickness of the air, they were under terror lest they be swallowed up by the thick cloud. This darkness, after three days and as many nights was dissipated.* [Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book II, XIV, 5]

Where was Ra, god of the sun? In the school of On, or Heliopolis, city of the sun, the worship of Ra was virtually almost monotheistic. He and Aten, the sun's disc, were worshiped with the *ankh*, symbol of life from the sun, as almost a sort of trinity.

Where was Horus, the god of the sunrise? Or Tem, the god of the sunset? Or Shu, the god of light? Or the deities of the moon and planets?