

Ex. 9:1 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.

Ex. 9:2 For if thou refuse to let *them* go, and wilt hold them still,

Ex. 9:3 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.

Ex. 9:4 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.

Ex. 9:5 And the LORD appointed a set time, saying, To morrow the LORD shall do **this thing in the land.**

The LORD sends Moses back to Pharaoh to tell him that the "LORD God of the Hebrews" says to let His people go so they can serve Him. (It's interesting that the Hebrew for the word "serve" indicates to work, serve, be enslaved, as well as worship. The Israelites were to be the servants of God—not Pharaoh. They were to love the Lord thy God with all their heart, soul and might. If you choose to love God in this way, then you are choosing to be a bondsman.) If he refuses again, the LORD will cause a plague on the livestock of the Egyptians. Again, none of the livestock of Israel would be affected. The time was set for the next day.

Ex. 9:6 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.

Ex. 9:7 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.

Again—it came down *just as the LORD said*. Pharaoh even sent his men to investigate as to whether any of the livestock of the Hebrews had been affected. Still his heart was unyielding, and he refused to let the people go. (Pride is a terrible thing! He was willing to let his own people suffer just to prove he was in charge.)

Ex. 9:8 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.

Ex. 9:9 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.

Ex. 9:10 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.

Ex. 9:11 And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils; for the boil was upon the magicians, and upon all the Egyptians.

Ex. 9:12 And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had spoken unto Moses.

The next sign that the LORD performed was to have Moses take handfuls of ash from a furnace and toss it in the air in the presence of Pharaoh. (It's interesting that Moses and Aaron were allowed continued access to the Pharaoh. Evidently, there was enough fear in his heart not to allow them to be harmed or to forbid them from approaching him. Come to think of it, that is how we often deal with God when we don't want to obey. We are aware that He is there and all powerful, but we figure we can ignore Him.)

When the ash hit the air, it spread over Egypt and caused boils to break out on men and animals throughout the land. When this happened, the magicians could not even stand before Moses because they were covered with boils. This time we are told that God hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he refused to let the people go—*just as the LORD had told Moses*. This truth is also stated at the time Moses turned the rod into a snake.

The fact that God would harden someone's heart is a hard thing to consider. I believe it can be explained in the same way that predestination or "being chosen as a child of God" is explained. Romans 8:29 says, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate...." The Bible is so clear on the fact that God gave man a choice to obey Him or not and that we are not preprogrammed. God knows the end from the beginning. He knows what each one of us is going to choose. Therefore, He chooses to utilize our choices to bring glory to Him—as in the case of Pharaoh. He didn't prevent Pharaoh from knowing the truth. He acted on the knowledge that Pharaoh would never respond to the truth. Even though I understand what I am saying, it's amazing to understand God's intimate knowledge of each one of His created beings from the beginning of time.

God could have intervened and freed His people at any time. Instead He chose to provide many signs to the Egyptians and their Pharaoh of who He was. Not only that, I think He was building the faith of the Israelites in the process. This was all part of the foundation that would leave them with no excuse for their lack of trust en route to the "promised land."

Ex. 9:13 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.

Ex. 9:14 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.*

Ex. 9:15 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.

Ex. 9:16 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.

Next, the LORD sends Moses to confront Pharaoh early in the morning again with the command from the "LORD God of the Hebrews" to let the people go and serve Him. Now He is going to send a plague that will be felt in his heart (the inner man) and by all his servants and his people. He even tells Pharaoh that He could wipe out the whole Egyptian population. Then He tells Pharaoh that he has been raised up for the purpose of showing God's power and to have His name proclaimed throughout all the earth.

(Ref **Mal. 1:11** For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name *shall be* great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense *shall be* offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name *shall be* great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.)

Ex. 9:17 As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt not let them go?

Ex. 9:18 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.

Ex. 9:19 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.

Ex. 9:20 He that feared the word of the LORD among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses:

Ex. 9:21 And he that regarded not the word of the LORD left his servants and his cattle in the field.

Since Pharaoh still refuses to let the people go, God tells Moses to tell Pharaoh that the worst hailstorm that has ever fallen on Egypt will happen the next day. He even warns Pharaoh that he should have the people bring in their livestock from the field to a place of shelter because any man or animal not under shelter will die. Some of Pharaoh's officials were listening and believed the word of the LORD; they brought their slaves and livestock inside. Others chose to ignore the warning.

Ex. 9:22 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.

Ex. 9:23 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.

Ex. 9:24 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.

Ex. 9:25 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.

Ex. 9:26 Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel *were*, was there no hail.

The LORD had Moses stretch out his hand toward heaven, and the hail fell on all the fields of Egypt. He stretched his rod toward heaven, and God sent thunder, hail and fire (thru lightning?) to the ground. It destroyed everything in the fields and stripped every tree. It did not hail in the land of Goshen where the Israelites were.

Ex. 9:27 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.

Ex. 9:28 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.

Ex. 9:29 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.

Ex. 9:30 But as for thee and thy servants, I know that ye will not yet fear the LORD God.

Ex. 9:31 And the flax and the barley was smitten: for the barley *was* in the ear, and the flax *was* balled.

Ex. 9:32 But the wheat and the rie were not smitten: for they *were* not grown up.

Ex. 9:33 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.

Ex. 9:34 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.

Ex. 9:35 And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, neither would he let the children of Israel go; as the LORD had spoken by Moses.

Pharaoh sends for Moses and Aaron again. This time he admitted that he had sinned, that he and his people are wicked, and that the LORD is righteous. He asked them to pray to the LORD to stop the thunder and hail, and he would let the people go. Moses again tells Pharaoh exactly what will happen so he will understand that it is the LORD God who is in control of things. He would go out of the city, spread out his hands in prayer to the LORD, and the thunder and hail would stop—but he added that he knew that Pharaoh and his officials still did not fear God. The flax and barley were destroyed, but the wheat and spelt were not since they had not ripened. Moses did as he had said he would—the rain, thunder and hail stopped—again Pharaoh hardened his heart (and his servants), and he would not let the people go. *ALL happened just “as the LORD had spoken to Moses.”*