



Pharaoh Will Not Listen to God

FAMILIES IN TRUTH

Exodus 5 - 10



Moses was chosen by God to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. Moses listened to God when God spoke to him in the desert, and God promised He would go with Moses. We see Pharaoh's heart become harder with each warning that Moses gave him, and Pharaoh refused to listen to God. God made His glory known when He moved His mighty hand in Egypt.

Day #1: God's Character

Choose someone in your family, and describe their character. Character is not what we see on the outside of a person, such as hairstyle or eye color. Character is what is on the inside of a person - who they are down deep. If someone was asked to describe your character, what do you think he would say?

What do we learn about God's character from His calling of Moses to deliver His people from slavery?

God hears our prayers.

The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers..." - Exodus 3:7a

God is compassionate.

"...and I am concerned about their suffering." - Exodus 3:7b

God keeps His promises.

God heard their groaning and He remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. - Exodus 2:24

God is all-knowing.

God knew just where to find Moses - even on the far side of the desert. (Exodus 3:1)

God is patient.

In Exodus 3 and 4, God listened patiently to all of Moses' doubts and excuses, answering each one.

God is all-powerful.

In Exodus 4, we see just a taste of the miracles God will perform to show His awesome power.

God is generous.

In Exodus 3:8, God promised Moses, "I will bring them into a good land. It has a lot of room. It is a land that has plenty of milk and honey."

God is THE PROVIDER.

So I have come down to save them from the Egyptians. I will bring them up out of that land. - Exodus 3:8a God, Himself, would provide the way to fulfill His own promise.

Take time to thank God for His amazing character and His goodness to us.

I think about the heavens. I think about what your fingers have created. I think about the moon and stars that you have set in place. What is a human being that you think about him? What is a son of man that you take care of him? - Psalm 8:3-4

Day #2: Pharaoh's Hard Heart

We saw at the end of our story last week, that the Hebrew people finally believed that Moses had been sent by God to deliver them from their slavery. Next, it was time for Moses and Aaron to speak to Pharaoh. They told him to let the Israelites go into the desert for three days to worship God by holding a feast in His honor. Pharaoh's answer tells us a lot about him.

Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord? Why should I obey him? Why should I let Israel go? I don't even know the Lord. And I won't let Israel go." - Exodus 5:1-2

Pharaoh did not know or have respect for God. He did not let the Israelites go. In fact, he called them lazy and made their labor even harder (Exodus 5:6-9). This upset the Israelites, and they complained to Moses and Aaron (Exodus 5:20-21). Moses took his concern to the Lord, and the Lord told Moses His promises once again. God told Moses to go and speak to Pharaoh again. Then God told Moses something very interesting about Pharaoh.

But I will make Pharaoh's heart stubborn. I will multiply my miraculous signs and wonders in Egypt. In spite of that, he will not listen to you. So I will use my powerful hand against Egypt. When I judge them with mighty acts, I will bring my people Israel out like an army on the march. - Exodus 7:3-4

Why would God want to make Pharaoh's heart stubborn? First of all, do not forget God's promise to Abraham, "I will curse those who curse you." Pharaoh had certainly chosen to curse Abraham's descendants. Secondly, look at the very next verse God spoke to Moses:

Then the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord. I will reach out my powerful hand against Egypt. I will bring the people of Israel out of it. - Exodus 7:5

God would make Pharaoh more stubborn to bring about a greater victory in the end - to make Himself known. When Pharaoh would not let the Israelites go, God performed many amazing miracles. The Egyptians worshipped hundreds false gods. They worshipped a sun god, a moon god, a wind god, and they even worshipped the Nile River. Because of the miracles God was going to perform, even the Egyptians would know that God was the ONE true God. God always seeks to make Himself known.

Declare His glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples. - Psalm 96:3

Sometimes God allows hardship for a time because He has a greater purpose - to make Himself known. At those times, we must TRUST the heart and character of God.

Day #3: The Plagues Begin

Because Pharaoh would not listen to God, God sent plagues. The definition of a plague is "any widespread affliction." That means a plague is a type of suffering that affects many people. God sent TEN of them. God told Moses what to say each time he met with Pharaoh. Moses listened to God and followed His instructions carefully.

The first plague (Exodus 7:14-24): The Nile River was very important to the Egyptians. On either side of the river was desert, so the people needed its water to drink, to give to their animals, and to water their crops. The Egyptians praised the Nile as if it were a god. They even sang worship songs to the river! Moses asked for his people to be let go, but Pharaoh refused, even though Moses warned him what would happen if he didn't. So God turned the water of the Nile into blood.

Moses and Aaron did exactly as the Lord had commanded them. Aaron held

Day #3 continued:

out his staff in front of Pharaoh and his officials. He struck the water of the Nile River. And all of the water turned into blood. The fish in the Nile died. The river smelled so bad the Egyptians couldn't drink its water. There was blood everywhere in Egypt. - Exodus 7:20-21

God showed the Egyptians that He created the Nile that sustained them, and He could take it away.

The second plague (Exodus 8:1-15): The Egyptians worshipped a goddess that was said to look like a woman with the head of a frog. They believed that she breathed life into people. So frogs were not allowed to be killed in Egypt. Seven days after God turned the Nile to blood, God sent Moses to warn Pharaoh again. Pharaoh still refused to let the Israelites go. This time God sent frogs. He sent lots and lots of frogs! They were everywhere - even in their food. There were even frogs in Pharaoh's bed! Pharaoh told Moses and Aaron that if they would pray to God to take the frogs away, he would let the people go. God killed all the frogs, but Pharaoh did not let the people go.

But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the Lord had said. - Exodus 8:15

The third plague (Exodus 8:16-19): This time without a warning, God sent a plague of gnats. God told Moses to strike the dust of the ground with his staff. When he did, all the dust throughout Egypt turned into annoying gnats! They were all over the people and animals. Again, Pharaoh's heart was hard and he wouldn't let the Israelites go.

Serious consequences come when we do not listen to God. Pharaoh passed up the opportunity to listen to God time and time again. We will see that the longer Pharaoh disobeyed, the more serious the consequences became.

How does God speak to you? (Bible reading, Bible teachers, our parents, prayer) We must listen to God when He speaks. Then we will live in blessings, not in consequences.

Day #4: Not on God's People

The Bible tells us that when God sent the first plagues, Pharaoh called in his magicians, and they were able to do similar things. They made water turned to blood and made more frogs appear. We are not certain whether the things done by the magicians are actually tricks (magic illusions), or if the magicians were given supernatural powers by Satan. Either way, what the magicians were able to do was not nearly as powerful as what God did. After the first two plagues, they tried, and failed, to produce gnats (Exodus 8:18). After that, they did not even try to keep up. They were never able to undo any part of God's plagues. And in the end, they admitted the plagues were done by the finger of God (Exodus 8:19). Just imagine, even the people who practiced sorcery and witchcraft confessed the power of God.

The fourth plague (Exodus 8:20-32): God told Moses to go to Pharaoh early in the morning. He was to warn Pharaoh that the next plague would be swarms of flies everywhere. But this time, God said he would spare His chosen people from the plague. Look closely at why God did this.

But on that day I will treat the area of Goshen differently from yours. That is where my people live. There will not be large numbers of flies in Goshen. Then you will know that I, the Lord, am in this land. I will treat my people differently from yours. The miraculous sign will take place tomorrow. - Exodus 8:22

Seeking relief from the flies, Pharaoh promised to let the people go. But once the flies were gone, he would not let the Israelites go.

The fifth plague (Exodus 9:1-7): Then God sent Moses to tell Pharaoh the next plague would kill all the livestock of the Egyptians - horses, donkeys, camels, cattle, sheep, and goats. But none of the Israelites' animals would be killed. In those days, a person's wealth was determined by how much livestock they owned. This plague would crush the Egyptian economy. Wealthy people would instantly become poor. Animals that did work, such as pull plows, would be gone. Animals used for food would be gone. Further more, the Egyptians believed these animals represented some of their gods. These animals were sacred to the Egyptians, but God proved they were powerless

Day #4 continued:

to help themselves. The plague came and all the Egyptian animals were killed.

Pharaoh sent men to investigate and found that not even one of the animals of the Israelites had died. Yet his heart was unyielding and he would not let the people go. - Exodus 9:7

The sixth plague (Exodus 9:8-12): The next plague came without warning. God told Moses and Aaron to take soot (black dust) from a furnace and throw it into the air. The dust blew across the land, and festering boils broke out on the Egyptians people and animals. These boils were inflamed blisters that would have been intensely painful. But still, Pharaoh would not let God's people go.

We have seen that Pharaoh's disobedience not only affected him and his household, but thousands of other people. Sin almost always affects other people. Discuss a time when someone else's sin affected you.

Day #5: Plagues in Full Force

We have seen that Pharaoh's land was hit with various vile and disgusting plagues. Still, Pharaoh's heart was hard and he stubbornly refused to listen to God through Moses' warnings.

The seventh plague (Exodus 9:13-35): Once again, God told Moses to go to Pharaoh early in the morning. This time God's warning was extremely harsh.

Go to Pharaoh and say to him, 'The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, says, "Let my people go. Then they will be able to worship me. If you do not let them go, I will send the full force of my plagues against you this time. They will strike your officials and your people. Then you will know that there is no one like Me in the whole earth. - Exodus 9:13b-14

This time God even explained to Pharaoh why this would happen.

But I had a special reason for making you king. I decided to show you my power. I wanted my name to become known everywhere on earth. - Exodus 9:16

God told Pharaoh He would send the worst storm that Egypt had ever had. He told him to order all people and animals to take cover. Everything left outside would be destroyed. By this time, some of Pharaoh's officials feared the word of God and they listened to Him. But some did not fear and did not listen. Just as God said, hail, rain, and lightning poured down on Egypt, except where the Israelites lived. Egypt was nearly destroyed. Pharaoh promised to let the people go, but when God stopped the storm, Pharaoh broke his promise.

The eighth plague (Exodus 10:1-20): The only crops that were not destroyed by the storm were the wheat and spelt because they had not ripened yet. God sent a plague of locusts. These are insects like grasshoppers or cicadas that devour crops. The locusts were everywhere - even inside all the homes. They wiped out everything that was not destroyed by the storm. Once more, Pharaoh begged Moses to forgive him and ask God to stop the plague. God shifted the wind and all the locusts were carried into the Red Sea, but Pharaoh did not let the people go.

The ninth plague (Exodus 10:21-29): After Pharaoh refused to listen to God again, God sent total darkness to cover Egypt for three days. There was no moon or stars. Few of us have ever experienced darkness like this. We must assume that even their lanterns did not work. In fact, no Egyptian could leave his home because of the darkness. The Israelites, however, did have light in their homes.

The tenth plague was the worst plague of all. It was the plague of death. We will look at this plague, and God's provision for His people next week.

God went to excessive lengths to make Himself known (Exodus 9:16). In Exodus 10:1-2 God tells Moses to tell his children and grandchildren of the miraculous wonders He performed in Egypt. Likewise, God wants you to tell people about the mighty works God has done in your life (Psalm 145:3-4).