

## Exodus 9

Written by K B Napier  
Wednesday, 21 March 2018 10:51

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Previously, we saw that God could, in an instant, bring disaster to the Egyptians. He was proving to Pharaoh and to all mankind, that God is supreme and Whose word is absolute. We have seen how such a power is inflicted upon evil men even today. In this chapter we are reminded that God can and does separate His people from the rest of mankind, protecting them.

We even see that though the majority of the Hebrews were unconvinced and almost rebellious, God nevertheless saved them from their captors! This is a definite proof of predestination. Here is God giving immense blessings to His people even when they were not particularly holy or genuinely on God's side. Think of this deeply, because how many of us have veered away from God, and yet He helps us?

The whole chapter shows us that even when we are not on God's side, once He has decided to help His people, He will do so, regardless of our personal responses. This is a vital and wonderful lesson to us all, for most of us think we must 'do' something to earn God's love and help! Far from it. He helps us because he wishes to, not because we do something for Him.

It is true that He rewards us when we commit our lives to Him and do whatever we can to obey, but it is not the obedience that brings His favours... it is His choice to help us that does so. Obedience is vital for so many reasons, but the ultimate factor that decides what God does, is His own choice, not our actions. That is why – surprise as it may be to many – that even our obedience is a gift of God. We cannot manufacture it, or work at it like a work-skill. We either have it, or we do not. It is an obedience based on the fact that God is our Lord and He demands it; it is a recognition of Who He is. Yes, he must give us the obedience, or the will to be obedient, but we must also take responsibility once we have the gift, and work at it, as He guides.

Meanwhile, do not expect the wicked to bow before God. Their sin dictates what their hearts and minds do. With very few exceptions, they will increase in their evils until the end, facing up to the Lord with a satanic defiance. They know they are finished, but they continue anyway, just like their father, the devil. He knows what his end place will be, yet he hates with a viciousness unsurpassed by any man! He only wishes to harm God and the saved... and even those who follow Satanic lives. Like Pharaoh, he will never know peace or have the ability to change.

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But – be filled with joy, for God will protect and favour all who are His! Even if they go off the rails, or are not quite what they ought to be! That is predestination. We are called AND chosen, whereas most people are not. This is God's prerogative; enjoy it.

### Verses 1 - 4

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 thou refuse to let them go, and wilt hold them still,

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.

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.”

If nothing else, the events surrounding the ten plagues of Egypt show us that Satan and sin resist even God. But God wants to show the world exactly Who controls the universe! It is not Satan, or sin, or evil people, but God. So, His command goes out to Pharaoh yet again – let my people go!

Moses was to go to Pharaoh and repeat the same words, and to add that, even if Pharaoh did not listen God and retained the Hebrews, then the “hand of the LORD is upon thy cattle... horses... asses... camels... oxen... sheep”. The Egyptian people may think that they owned the animals they had, but God is telling them that He alone holds them in His power. And, as a sign of this “*there shall be a very grievous murrain*” if Pharaoh would not release the Hebrews.

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A 'murrain', or **deber**, is a fatal pestilence, a plague that attacks cattle and other animals. The warning was very clear: let the people go, or the domesticated animals kept in fields would die. Every one of them.

But note the remarkable second sign – God would separate the animals owned by the Hebrews from those owned by the Egyptians. None of the Hebrew animals would be affected, but the Egyptian animals would die! Once again we see that this is a genuine miracle, for no man could manage to separate different animals in such a way when a plague strikes! Yet, this is what God did. The plague descending on command is one sign, but to keep all the Hebrew animals safe was quite another, doubling the power and authority of the signs.

### Verses 5 - 7

1.

“And the LORD appointed a set time, saying, To morrow the LORD shall do this thing in the land.

2.

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.

3.

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.”

God determined when the plague was to strike... it would happen the next day. I hazard a guess that this was to heighten the fear amongst the people of Egypt. When the next day came, God struck down the animals belonging to the Egyptians, but He kept all the animals belonging to the Hebrews safe. Pharaoh sent servants to see what had happened, and they reported almost total destruction of all animals left in the field, as God promised. Animals left indoors were not killed, as we shall see later. Despite such a slaughter, Pharaoh refused to comply.

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For me, the biggest lesson is not that God can bring disaster upon people, but that He protects His own, even when they are not particularly holy in return. This, of course, flies in the face of those in, say, charismatic churches, who think that they must always be on an upward-spiral of 'holiness' in order to attract God's love and attention. That is, by Arminianistic means, or 'works'. You will also find this ideology (it is not faith) in Roman Catholicism... see how ignorant people drag themselves on pilgrimages, on their knees, or flagellating their bodies, or even playing-out Christ's crucifixion, to make themselves 'more worthy'!

If nothing else, we must understand that it is God Who gives us the ability and desire to obey; it is God Who gives the ability to do what is right and to live a holy life; we cannot make ourselves holy or obedient simply by wishing it. This is really the ultimate lesson in predestination – none of self and all of God!

### Verses 8 - 12

1.

"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.

2.

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.

3.

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.

4.

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

5.

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

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After the plague struck the Egyptian animals, God spoke again to Moses and Aaron. Moses was to take *“handfuls of ashes of the furnace”* and must throw the particles into the air in front of Pharaoh. Yet another mighty sign, a miracle, would be shown to Pharaoh.

The ‘ashes’, **piyach**, was the soot residue from the fire of a ‘furnace’, **kibshan**: or pottery kiln. When Moses threw it into the air, it would spread all around Egypt as small dust clouds, to then fall to earth, landing on men and any animals still alive from the last plague.

When the dust settled on the flesh, the skin would erupt into infected boils (blains). The word for ‘boils’ is also used to describe leprosy, so it might have been reference to that deadly disease. The magicians were powerless once again, mainly because they, too, were infected with the condition, along with all the other Egyptians. But, as before, pharaoh refused to listen or to allow the Hebrews to leave Egypt. This was, again, because God had predestinated him to have a hardened heart. It must be repeated, that when God has made His judgment nothing can deter it, and God will never change His mind. The same goes for His choice of saved people... He cannot make a mistake!

### Verses 13 - 19

1.

“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.

2.

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.

3.

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.

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4.

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.

5.

As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt not let them go?

6.

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.

7.

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.”

As we have seen, everything done thus far has been of God, not of men. And so it continues. God has a plan and it will be brought about no matter what. God told Moses to again go to Pharaoh, and to repeat the same demand – to let the people go. Many Christians listen to scoffers and railers against God, and they attempt to answer every single objection they make! We must do what God does – adhere to the same simple statement and keep making it. Answer one objection or question and there will come another. Those who object or question have no intention of listening to answers. It is all designed to take you away from your path.

Seek discernment, and learn to find the heart of any situation or statement. Then, aim a holy dart right to the heart of it, to strike it down. One of the main signs that you have struck the right place is an angry response or violent reaction. Do not get deviated. Repeat the truth.

Moses was to tell Pharaoh that God would bring many plagues upon him and his people, to show them that He alone was Almighty God. There are no other gods. God would now strike Egypt with another pestilence that would destroy the people.

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Then comes the remarkable statement that should cause all Arminians to bow the knee to God. Moses is to tell Pharaoh that he had been born expressly to be the target of God's wrath! He was born to be damned to hell, so that God's name could be glorified. Arminianists defy God on many fronts. They try to provide a long list of texts to 'prove' God loves 'everybody' equally. But He does not. Indeed, scripture even says He hates certain people! There is no way anyone can get past these texts. The texts on Pharaoh are very clear, and even if they were the only ones to exist, they are stunningly precise. They tell us that God actually prevented a man from listening to Him, and deliberately sent him to hell!

The reason, as always, is that God will be glorified. He created everything because He wished to do so. He saves some because He chooses to do so. He sends many to hell, because He chooses to do so. He gave the world to mankind as a place to live, with many allowances. He also gave the world to Satan until the end of time, to be its lord, so that those who were not saved could serve him. Nothing in this world is the product of mankind, not even wicked deeds. Those who are wicked are so because their father the devil prompts them!

Moses was to ask Pharaoh who he thought he was, acting against God's people, pretending he was 'something', and above the Hebrews. Could Pharaoh have done otherwise? It seems not, because God hardened his heart. Do not object to this. God chooses what he wishes. It is none of our business.

The next day, said God, He would send a terrifying storm of hailstones, *barad*, upon Egypt. It would be of such ferocity as to eclipse anything ever seen before. God then gives a lifeline to Pharaoh – he was to gather all the animals still left alive, so that they could be placed under a roof. Any left in the fields would be killed by the hail.

### Verses 20 - 26

1.

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

2.

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

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3.

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.

4.

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.

5.

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.

6.

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.

7.

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

Those who would not listen left their animals in the fields. Yet they had seen the other miracles! Others, fearful of God, put their animals into shelters. There will always be fools in this world, who reject God’s word, even if it crushes them.

Next day, God commanded Moses to stretch out his stick upwards to heaven. This would be the sign for hail to come, to kill everything outside. A very similar sign would be used later, when the angel of death passed over Egypt. Instantly, God sent thunder and hailstones. We are told that ‘fire’ ran along the ground. I can only see this as horizontal lightning. It is rare in many lands, but have you seen it? Many years ago whilst working in a hospital with tall buildings, a storm struck our city. As I looked to the west, lightning came to earth in great multi-coloured forks, and long

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tongues of 'fire' travelled horizontally over the low hills. It was both wondrous and terrifying! I was ordered to take vital operating equipment to the sterilising department, in metal containers. I declined and stayed indoors!

Egypt, then, witnessed hail and thunder and lightning such as they had never seen before. I have no doubt it scared them witless. Everything outside, whether men, animals or plants, all died in the storm. It even toppled great trees. But, as before, all the Hebrews in Goshen remained alive and nothing was harmed. God is with us, so who can be against us?

### Verses 27 - 30

1.

"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.

2.

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.

3.

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.

4.

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

Pharaoh, seeing the destruction, sent for Moses and Aaron and said "*I have sinned this time*". He then admitted that God was righteous and just and that they were all wicked before Him. He begged Moses to pray to God, to stop the carnage. Was this genuine repentance? No, it was not. Pharaoh hinted that he would let the people go.

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Moses promised to go outside, spread his arms out, and therefore stop the thunder, lightning, hail and rain. In this way, said Moses, you will surely know God is the owner of everything on this earth. But Moses added that he knew Pharaoh and the people would not fear God. All they wanted was for the destruction to finish!

How many people, unsaved, call on God to stop this or that problem in their lives/ And how many Christians think that such pleading is a sign of their turning to God? Really, it is just the human desire to be rid of a bad thing. Once it disappears, they return to their old ways. That is because they are unsaved. Remember that God does not listen to the prayers of the unsaved, no matter how heart-rending they might sound to us! I am not saying this out of malice or with joy. I am simply being grateful that I have been chosen for salvation.

### Verses 31 - 35

1.

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

2.

But the wheat and the rye were not smitten: for they were not grown up.

3.

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.

4.

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.

5.

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

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The flax (fibre of a plant, used to make clothing), ***pishtah***, was struck down as it was budding, along with the barley. Both were close to harvest. Because it was not time for the harvesting of wheat and rye, both these plants were unharmed. Here we have a small clue as to the time of the storm. Rie is planted in autumn and spring. So, the storm came in between, probably in either summer or our Christmas/New Year.

Moses did as he promised, went outside the palace, and held up his arms to stop the storm. As soon as Pharaoh saw a cessation of the storm. He and his servants again sinned, refusing to let the Hebrews go! God evidently had even more to do to Egypt.... And He did.

Not so long previously, Moses complained that He had been sent to speak to Pharaoh, but he did not listen, nor had God acted. To this point, God had acted in many ways, remarkable and miraculous ways. Yet, Pharaoh and the Egyptians refused to listen, drawing even worse signs to themselves. Many of us go through awful times, and wonder why it is happening. Yet, do not think God is silent or that nothing is going on. On many occasions God is working in the background, preparing the way for His people. Whilst matters get worse, they are also moving towards what God wishes to achieve! So, stay with it, friends. He will not let us down! Once His time is ripe, all will be revealed.

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