

THE FINGER OF GOD (Exodus 5-10)

Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh with the command of YHWH: Let my people go.
Pharaoh's response: Who?

Pharaoh's strategic answer to this request for a 3-day holiday in the wilderness?
Answering this laziness by making life harder on the Jewish slaves.
Busy them so completely that they have no time for lies

Made obnoxious now, the Israelites are convinced Moses has put a sword in Pharaoh's hand
But, because of the Lord's mighty hand, the people will walk away free (6:1)

6:6 - I will redeem you with an outstretched arm

Genealogy Break in the Action

Just like the genealogy of Jesus demonstrates God's power to bring deliverance from dysfunction, so this family tree testifies to God's great power:

Moses and Aaron's dad married his mom's sister (LATER FORBIDDEN).

Simeon fathered Shaul with a Canaanite woman (LATER FORBIDDEN).

Moses and Aaron weren't the fruit of a perfect family tree, but evidence God can bring deliverance from dysfunction.

So, the brothers made their way to Pharaoh and carried God's word.

What followed was a succession of plagues not randomly assigned, but strategically intended to illustrate God's ultimate power.

YHWH is at war with the gods of Egypt, exposing them as powerless in the presence of the one true God. **Pharaoh's magicians came to see clearly: This is the finger of God." (8:19)**

Important to note this development.

Scripture is clear that Pharaoh's heart is hard, unwilling at first to let the people go or honor Moses and Aaron's requests because of his own stubborn resolve. Only after the first five plagues fail to produce Pharaoh's agreement to their terms does God act to harden his heart for the ultimate display of His own power.

After nine plagues come upon the people of Egypt, God will strike the decisive blow that will display His power and authority, his mighty hand and outstretched arm.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Looking back at the first nine plagues God poured out, if you were one of the Egyptians, which one would have had you knocking down Pharaoh's door to let those people go?

As a stubborn, proud person, can you identify with Pharaoh at all?

Esteemed by his people and granted divine status, Pharaoh had a hard time respecting the Great I Am. Inflated self-importance hardened his heart. Can you identify with that?

Rereading the Exodus account of the plagues God brought upon Egypt, does it make more sense to understand them as a showdown between the Great I Am and the false gods of Egypt?

For 400 years the people of God lived as slaves, mistreated and abused. How does a righteous God repay that kind of wickedness?

Five times Pharaoh and the Egyptians are plagued with a chance to let God's people go. Then, God determines to harden Pharaoh's heart so He can make an example of him and his obstinate refusal to respect Him as God.

Pharaoh's magicians declare this is the finger of God.

Have you ever seen the finger of God at work in your life?

How do you know when God is at work like this?

What does God's willingness to act like this suggest about his heart for his people?

As the early church gathered under persecution in Jerusalem, they prayed to God:

"Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus." (Acts 4:30).

God answered them and the church multiplied, even under threat of persecution.

How can we live like a people with an expectation of God's mighty hand and outstretched arm at work in our time?

Who are the false gods that need to be exposed here and now?

Pray boldly like our 1st century brothers and sisters for God to stretch out His hand.