

All Encompassing - Exodus 10:1-29

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[0:00] So we've gone through 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. What are we up to? We're up to number 8 of the plagues. We've gone through 7 plagues. Last week we did boils and hail, and that just moved us past the midway point of Egypt's tribulation, the mid-trib.

And now we've done the boils, the hail, and we're going to move into locusts, darkness, and then the plague of the firstborn, or the judgment of the firstborn.

That's its own thing. We'll leave that for another time. So hopefully we'll get through the next two today. And these two are very interesting as God is kind of ramping up his, I guess his, the intensity of his call to Egypt and the people in Egypt, that they would hear his voice.

We've read over and over, as he said to Pharaoh, through Moses, through Aaron, the reason I'm doing this is that you may know, that you may know that there is no other God in all the earth, that you may know that I am the Lord.

So he's saying about that song, Jehovah, there's no God like Jehovah, that you may know that I am Jehovah, that I am the sufficient one, the existing one. And so as God is responding with intensity, that's ramping up to the intensity with which Egypt is rejecting.

[1:11] And we're going to see that today in the text, that they're not humbling themselves. They're rejecting and pushing back against what God is doing. As they intensify their rejection, God intensifies his response to that as well.

And today we'll see how this picture between these two plagues, how the consequences and nature of sin, it's all encompassing. Nobody escapes it.

It is completely and 100% encompassing, as God is going to send these two all encompassing plagues upon the nation. If you remember, we said last week, or we've seen all along, I guess, how the flesh always fails.

The flesh, it fails. And we've seen how as it fails, it corrupts. And then as it corrupts, it festers. And how that has led Egypt to this place where they're not prepared, or they've not prepared their hearts, or set their hearts to respond to God's word and receive God's word.

And we saw how an unprepared heart leads to an unprepared life. As they chose then, who would respond? Who is going to respond as God says to Egypt, hey, nationally, sorry guys, it's over.

[2:16] There's no, you're past the point of no return. Pharaoh, I'm sorry, you're past the point of no return as well. But he left individual redemption available. That if anyone wanted to enter into that place of refuge, hey, you could.

You could bring all of your workers and all of your cattle and all of your livestock out of the field into the home of refuge, if you wanted to. If you had a prepared heart, you have a prepared life. But we're going to see with Pharaoh, this idea that Pharaoh's heart is now past the point of no return. It's like, well, what does that mean? Like, what if he just decided, okay, I'm going to respond to God. I'm going to respond to God's grace. Well, the scripture tells us that in 1 Peter 1, verse 4, it says that you have an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled that fades not away, reserved in heaven for you.

Well, who's the you he's talking about? Well, those of us who put our faith in Christ. We have been born again. We have eternal life. That is a current state that we exist in. Now, we do not experience all the fullness of that in this body and in this world.

That will be after the resurrection. But we have been born again. So we could say definitively to those who are in Christ, hey, you have entered in.

[3:29] You never have to fear falling away because you'll be kept by God. Well, only God knows when a heart has rejected him to the point where he can look at that heart and say, your eternal state is fixed.

Your eternal state is fixed in rejecting me. No amount of grace, no amount of love, no amount of my word is going to change your heart because you've hardened it so many times that you have fixed yourself in this life for your eternity in rejecting me.

That's where Pharaoh's at. And only God knows that, right? We never stop reaching out. God never stops. He doesn't turn to Pharaoh and go, well, you know, Pharaoh, I'm done with you and just smoke him.

No, as we've seen, who is he dealing with? Who is his word coming to over and over? And his grace and his mercy and his long suffering to the greatest rejecter in history, Pharaoh. So if God's grace and goodness is to Pharaoh, who we know, according to the scriptures, past that point of no return, well, then who are we to ever withhold it from someone?

Only God knows that. For us, we continue to reach out until the end. But for Pharaoh and for Egypt, they are past that point. John chapter three, verses 19 and 20.

[4 : 35] Jesus says, this is the condemnation that light has come into the world. And men loved darkness rather than light. The ability to see, the ability to have the world around you exposed for what it is.

And men said, no, we'd love, we'd rather have darkness. God sent a remedy and the condemnation is no, because their deeds were evil. For everyone that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

Sin is all encompassing. It's like that darkness, as we're gonna see in one of the plagues today, completely encompassing. But in that darkness, God sends his light. So let's begin in verse one of chapter 10.

And the Lord said unto Moses, and this is after, remember, in the end of chapter nine, where the plague of the hail was lifted. And it says, and Pharaoh sinned yet more and more and hardened his heart.

The Lord said unto Moses, go in unto Pharaoh. And Moses said, oh goody, I couldn't wait. The weekend's over. Back to work, back to Pharaoh. And the Lord said unto Moses, go in unto Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants.

[5 : 43] Same old thing. You think if you're Moses, again, Lord, couldn't you send Aaron alone this time? Maybe, maybe we could go in shifts. But look what the Lord says here, that I might show my signs, that I might show these my signs before him.

God has his reason. We should never discount God's ability to show his grace. Moses, I want you to go into Pharaoh. I want you again to go. I know his heart's hardened. I know the heart of his servants are hardened.

Moses, but I want my signs to be seen. I want Pharaoh to know. God's grace comes in the most unlooked for ways and to the most unlikely of people. And he says, and that you may tell it in the ears of your son.

Well, this is something new, Moses. Moses, go in unto Pharaoh, that I might show my signs before him, because I want you to tell your sons. And your sons' sons, what things I have wrought in Egypt and my signs which I have done among them, that you may know that I am the Lord.

God's deliverance is never just for now, but it always has an eye to the future. It always has an eye to be passed on. It's never just for now. John, the apostle John, you know, we're going through Revelation.

[6 : 54] The apostle John wrote the book of Revelation. He wrote the book of John. He wrote 1st and 2nd and 3rd John. In writing much older in his life, writing 3rd John, he writes this. He says, I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

That's his greatest joy. He said, John, you were there. You went into the house of the high priest when Jesus was being tried. John, you were there at the cross. None of the other disciples were at the cross.

John, you were there. And Jesus said to Mary, to his mother, he said, woman, behold your son. Son, behold your mother. And he gave Mary into the care of John. John, you are on the Mount of Transfiguration.

And you have no greater joy. You've ministered for years into the church of Ephesus. You have no greater joy than to hear that the truth is being passed on. That's where his greatest joy is.

God's deliverance is not just for now, but it always has an eye to the future. And God's judgment is for God's glory. How is God getting glory?

[7 : 55] By the hail coming down on people who wouldn't leave the field? Well, because God's judgment gives opportunity to display his deliverance. God's judgment on the cross gave opportunity for him to display deliverance that he could not display otherwise if he didn't bring that judgment.

In John chapter eight, verses 31 and 32, Jesus says to the Jews who believe on him, if you continue in my word, then are you my disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.

If you continue as his disciples, if you've come to the place where you've accepted God's judgment, as we said, so that we can enter into God's deliverance. And then he ends that section there and he says, and that you may know that I am, and that's that word there, Jehovah, that you may know that I am Jehovah.

Piecing those two together. Moses at the burning bush, I am that I am, Moses. And then later on, he says to Moses, by El Shaddai, by God Almighty, you have known me, but you have not known me by Jehovah.

But now you shall know me by the existing sufficient one. That you may know. God does not want us to just know that he is, but he also wants us to know who he is.

[9 : 05] You know, Pharaoh knows that God is. Egypt knows that God is. But God wants us to know who he is. And he displays that how? Well, through his judgment.

Through judgment, God displays who he is, so that through judgment, God can display mercy and deliverance. And Moses and Aaron then, okay, Moses says, all right, God, this sounds pretty good. I'm ready to go. You know, he went to church Sunday. He got filled up. He's ready for the week now. Heading back to work, going into Pharaoh. And Moses and Aaron came in unto Pharaoh, and they said unto him, thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, how long will you refuse to humble yourself before me?

Well, here we get a little insight. We've read that God has hardened Pharaoh's heart. We've read that Pharaoh has hardened his heart. But now Moses says, thus says the Lord God, how long will you refuse?

Will you be utterly unwilling to humble yourself before me? Let my people go that they may serve me. Psalm 147, six says, the Lord lifts up the meek, the humble, those who put themselves in a position before God, which is humble and humility, not those who lift themselves up.

[10 : 19] He casts the wicked down to the ground. Jesus in Matthew 23, verse 12 says, and whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased.

And he that shall humble himself shall be exalted. Because God just liked him. He doesn't like anyone, you know, competing with him. He's got to put him down. Nobody can compete with God. That's not it at all. But humility places us in our proper relationship before God.

Humility places us in a relationship before God where we are responders, not determiners. Sin ruins that relationship and says, well, I'm going to determine my own destiny. I'm going to be like Pharaoh and I'm going to determine how this is going to go.

But humility puts us in our proper and right relationship with God where Jesus can say, God wants to lift up. His desire is to lift up. But as soon as you seek to lift up self, you take yourself out of a place where God can lift you up.

And if you're not, as we've said before, Jesus said, you're either for me or against me. You're either drawing near to God or you're drawing away from him. There's no middle ground. Either you're being lifted up by God or you're being put down because you rejected him.

[11 : 24] It's the only natural outcome. We've talked a bunch of times about pride. We know Proverbs 16, 18 says, pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.

What's pride? What does pride mean? What is that? You know, he said, I'm proud of my boy or I'm proud of this project I've finished. You know, I'm proud of this mess we made to the stage. I'm proud we got it all back together because at one point yesterday, I'm thinking, wow, we got to have church tomorrow.

We're going to be here all day. But what is pride? To kind of boil it down in its simplest essence, there's a lot of definitions, but pride is an elevated view of one's own sufficiency. Pride elevates the sufficiency of myself, that I put myself, I can do it.

I got it. I'm good. And so there's Pharaoh here where God says to him, how long will you refuse to humble yourself? Pharaoh, how long are you going to have an elevated view of your own

sufficiency? Humble yourself.

Make this choice, Pharaoh. Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall. And what is Pharaoh doing to himself, his nation and his people?

[12 : 29] Or else if you refuse to let my people go, behold, tomorrow will I bring the locusts into your coast. Dun, dun, dun. Sounds like a motorcycle gang. Here comes the locust. He's going to bring the locusts into their coast.

And so here we come to our eighth plague. If you have your sheet, you'll see on there that this is referring to the god Set. He's the god of storms and disorder. It's also like considered the protector of crops.

And the judgment here is upon the sky. Their worship of the sky. And the message to us is that God's judgment is complete. These locusts we're going to see, they are complete and utter judgment and destruction.

But it's interesting that the god of storms and disorder, why would they worship this god as a protector of crops? Because they relied upon their crops, their agriculture, and they had no way at all, no ability to influence what the weather was going to be.

Are we going to have drought this year? Are we going to have a good crop? What's going to have a locusts going to come? And so they thought, they saw storm and disorder as a problem. Well, we need someone who control this.

[13 : 28] We'll make up this god set. The world believes that order comes from chaos, which comes from, there's a doctrine of devils. That comes from the enemy.

Satan tries to convince the world, hey, out of chaos will come order. You know, out of destruction will come life. You know, we got to tear down what's here and then rising from the ashes somehow will be the phoenix of something.

But in Christ, there's no such thing as chaos. Chaos is confusion, disorder, and that which is out of control. In Christ, there's none of that, is there? 1 Corinthians 14, 33 says, for God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.

There is no chaos. We don't need to worship some false god because we have a God who has everything in his hands. Colossians 1, 16 and 17 says, for by him were all things created that are in heaven, that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things were created by him and for him.

And he is above all things and by him all things consist. So there is no such thing as chaos in Christ. But for the Egyptians, they looked at the wind, the storms, and the locusts, they moved upon the wind.

[14 : 45] You'd have a swarm of locusts and depending on where the wind blew, that's where your locusts were going. In verse 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 remains unto you from the hail.

Remember the hail crushed all the trees and the crop that was up at the time. And they shall eat every tree which grows, which grows for you out of the field. I figure there's like one tree left in Egypt by this time.

There's not that many trees. It's like desert and you've had hail and all of this and fire. It's probably like one little tree that's left. But what does this tell us? That there's no escaping the effect of sin. Romans 6.23, the wages of sin is death. There's no escaping it. It's all encompassing. We can't escape that. None of us will escape the consequences of sin. None of us can escape the effect of sin.

But we can be delivered from it. Right? Nobody born can escape that. Nobody born can say, hey, guys, I managed to escape not even Jesus born into this world, sinless, escaped the effect of sin.

[15 : 49] But he did deliver us from it. So as we see these two plagues, eight and nine, it's to speak to us of the all-encompassing and overwhelming nature and effect of sin.

Verse six, and they shall fill your houses. Oh good, we've had frogs in our houses and we've had lice in our houses and we've had flies in our houses. And now we're going to have locusts. A locust is like a three inch, about three to four inches, a very large grasshopper.

That's what they look like. I don't like grasshoppers. Funny story. Henry and I were coming back from, I don't know what we were doing. And there was like a, Katie did, you know what Katie does are?

And it's like a type of a locust. Like one of those big, green, like grasshopper, leafhoppers. And it was hanging on the rear view mirror of my truck. We're driving, it's like, we're on 16. I'm like, Henry, I think it was on the windshield first.

I did the wipers. It ends up over here on the side mirror. And I said, at the next stoplight, I'm going to roll my window down and flick him off. And he's like, no, no, no. He's going to come in the car. I'm like, he's not going to come in the car. So he stopped the stoplight.

[16:49] I rolled the window down and I flicked it. And that thing just went, and held on and then jumped in the car. Henry screamed and thankfully, he tried to get the door open and would have been out at the stoplight.

And I screamed and I threw my door open and I'm trying to get this thing out. The thing was huge. And it was like, there's one in the car and we were ready to run out of the truck. And it was very dramatic and traumatic, but we joke about it all the time anytime we see one of those now. But these locust swarms, they will fill your house and the houses of all your servants and the houses of all the Egyptians, which neither your fathers nor your father's fathers have seen since the day that they were upon the earth unto this day.

And then Moses turns himself and goes out from Pharaoh. So these locust swarms, you think of Egypt, which at one time was the breadbasket of the world under Joseph. Seven years of plenty where God brought in all of the nations to come to Egypt to receive life.

And now he's having to destroy that and undo that. Don't ever think that for the sake of his people, God won't destroy a nation, won't destroy his creation. The value God puts in creation is you and I.

[17:54] It's not all of this. This is all going to pass away. But a locust swarm, very interesting. A typical swarm can be made up of 390 million locusts per square mile.

390 million locusts can eat the food equivalent of 90,000 people in a day. So in one square mile, they're eating the food equivalent in plant life of 90,000 people. And a large swarm, a large swarm can cover up to 460 square miles, roughly the size of Pennsylvania.

460 square miles times 390 million locusts is a lot of locusts. And then God says to the Egyptians, this is like nothing that's been since creation. I mean, I cannot imagine what this must have been like.

The decisions of the heart have drastic consequences in life. They will eat up everything around us, everything that's fruitful. And as we saw in Proverbs 16, 18, pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.

A hard heart is a hard life. Jesus says in Matthew 21, verses 42 and 44, he said unto them, did you never read the scriptures?

[19:02] The stone which the builders rejected, the stone they rejected at the time they were building the temple, they didn't realize what it was. He said the same became the head of the corner. You needed a cornerstone so you could then square off the rest of your building.

This is the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes. And whosoever shall fall on this stone, Jesus is referring to himself as that chief cornerstone by which we square our entire life. Whoever falls on this stone shall be broken, but on whomever it shall fall is going to be ground to powder. A hard heart is a hard life. And Moses turned himself and went out from Pharaoh. Proverbs 14, 7 says, go from the presence of a foolish man who now perceives not in him the lips of knowledge. And Moses turned himself, he's turned around. Have you ever had that? Where someone says, whatever, and he's like, I really can't answer this. There's another proverb that says, answer a fool according to his folly lest he be wise in his own conceit.

So there's time to answer someone. Like, hey, if I don't answer you, you're going to think that like, you know, these Egyptian gods with frog heads are real, okay? But then it says, answer not a fool according to his folly lest you be like unto him.

[20:09] And there's a time just to be like, you know, if I open my mouth you're going to think I'm going to be just like you. I'm not going to say anything. Moses turns and he walks out from the presence of Pharaoh and Pharaoh's servants said unto him, unto Pharaoh, how long shall this man be a snare unto us?

Shall cause us injury. Let the man go. Let the men go that they may serve the Lord their God. Do you not know yet that Egypt is destroyed? Pharaoh, you've destroyed.

This place is destroyed. Let them go. Let the men go. Pride never acknowledge, will never acknowledge the destruction that it brings. Pride won't acknowledge that.

Pharaoh's like, this isn't my fault. And pride rejects the truth as these men are and they resent those who proclaim it. How long shall this man be a snare unto us? Moses is just presenting the truth. But pride rejects that truth, never sees the destruction that it brings, and then it resents those who dare to point out the truth to them as Pharaoh is. Do you not know yet that Egypt is destroyed? [21 : 09] Literally to vanish. Jesus in Matthew 24, 35, heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. They shall vanish. They shall vanish, but God's word will not vanish.

Pharaoh, you're not going to be able to fight against God's word. And Moses and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh. And he said unto them, go serve the Lord. But who are they that shall go?

Pharaoh's trying to work another deal here. As the locusts have eaten everything. What was left? Remember what was left? The wheat and the barley. So it was the food.

Before it was the flax and the, I can't remember what else it was, but it was what they would have used for like clothing. And what's left? Well, now the wheat's come up. Their grain has come up. And now here comes the locusts to destroy everything.

Go serve the Lord your God, but who are they that shall go? Essentially, Pharaoh is saying, well, go serve the Lord, but don't have too big of an influence, right? Don't let it reach the next generation as we're going to see here.

[22 : 14] But for God, no one is to be left out of deliverance. Nobody is to be left behind. The enemy is going to directly target the next generation. Contrary, right, to God's word. What do we see in verse 2?

That you may tell it in the ears of your sons and your sons' sons what things I have done in Egypt. God says, I want your children to know this. The enemy now comes and directly contradicts that and says, oh, no, no, in verse 9.

Moses said, we will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters. Sorry, I lost my spot. We will go with our sons and our daughters, with our flocks and our herds.

Will we go? For we must hold a feast unto the Lord. No one is to be left out of worship. No one is to be left out of deliverance. No one is to be left out of serving the Lord. I love the fact that we're so varied here.

One of the things or from the beginning that we, the Lord kind of put on our hearts or on Allison's heart was, hey, let's make up worksheets so the kids can follow along or the kids, the young people can follow along.

[23 : 16] But man, we're a family. Yeah, we want to accommodate if there are those who have smaller kids or need a space or whatever. But no one is to be left out here. No one is left behind. In Psalm 78, the psalmist writes, speaking of the Lord, for he established a testimony in Jacob and he appointed a law in Israel which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children that the generation to come might know them even the children which should be born who should arise and declare them to their children that they might set their hope in God and not forget the works of God but keep his commandments.

Mom and dad, you're not done until your children's children know the Lord. And he said unto them, well, Pharaoh says, let the Lord do so with you. So will I let you go and your little ones look to it for evil is before you.

I don't know if you're reading this in the King James. You say, well, is he saying let them go?

Because in verse 11, he says not so. What he's saying here, he's essentially saying, hey, all right, you better hope the Lord's on your side.

You better hope the Lord can do that. You think the Lord's going to let you go and your little ones? Hey, evil is before you, Moses. Not so. I'm not going to let them go. Verse 11, go now you that are men and serve the Lord.

For that you did desire and they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence. The enemy seeks to placate us with false half-truths, twisted words, and compromise.

[24 : 42] Pharaoh says, listen, go take the men. That's what you desired. Did they want the men to go? They sure did. But did they also want the women and the children? Yeah. The enemy comes and he comes to seek, he seeks to placate us with just partial truth, twisted words, and compromise.

He says, look it, I'll meet you halfway. Okay? That good? I mean, you know, you wanted a church and a building you thought God was calling you? Great, well, just stay within it. Don't have any

impact in the community.

Don't tell people to share their faith. Just stay within these walls. John 8, 44 says about the enemy that when he speaks, he speaks of his own for he's a liar and the father of it.

And the Lord said unto Moses, as Moses then, I'm sorry, in verse 11 at the end there, it says, and they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence. So Pharaoh thinks he's being a big guy and playing this, this like, I'm a tough guy card.

Oh no, you're not getting out of here. Only the men, I'll let you go. And the Lord said unto Moses, stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come upon the land of Egypt and eat every herb of the land and all that the hail has left.

[25 : 44] All of the wheat, all the food that was left. 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. And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt and rested in all the coasts of Egypt. Very grievous. Oh, that word before. Very heavy, were they?

And I bet they were. I bet they were thick. Get out the snow shovels, kid. Before them, there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such. Locusts everywhere. The wages of sin demands the most severe of judgments.

God's judgment is all-encompassing. Sin places us opposed to that which cannot be opposed.

Pharaoh said, oh no, you're not gonna do this. You're not gonna take God's people.

He's coming up against the immovable word of God. Sin places Pharaoh against something that he can't move and he never will. The next day, the Lord says to Moses, well, that was interesting.

Moses, stretch your hand out.

[26 : 47] This is what's gonna happen. Sin places us opposed to that which cannot be moved, the immovable word of God. As God says in Numbers 23, 19, eventually speaking to Israel when they're in the wilderness, God is not a man that he should lie.

Neither is a son of man that he should repent. Has he said and shall he not do it? And the idea is yes, he will. Or has he spoken and shall he not make it good? God's word is immovable.

Those that become opposed to God's word, they will be moved. Whether it takes days, weeks, months, years, or a lifetime. For the locusts, they covered the face of the whole earth so that the land was darkened.

Sin leads to darkness. And they did eat every herb of the field of the land and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left. Sin consumes our fruitfulness. And there remained not any green thing in the trees or in the herbs of the field throughout all the land of Egypt.

Sin destroys life. Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste as he's got, I don't know how many pounds of locusts covering the land. And he said, I've sinned against the Lord, your God, and against you.

[27 : 56] Pharaoh's repented. Remember we saw that before too. We saw that last week in chapter nine when Pharaoh at the end there, he says, Pharaoh sent and called to Moses and Aaron and said unto them, I've sinned this time.

The Lord is righteous and I and my people are wicked. And then God removes the plague and it says, Pharaoh sinned yet more, hardening his heart and says, well, and I changed my mind.

Pharaoh called to Moses here in verse 16 and Aaron and said, I've sinned against the Lord and against you.

True repentance recognizes that our responsibility is not to man but to God. Pharaoh says, oh, I've sinned against God and against you. Now therefore, forgive. Moses, forgive me.

Moses isn't the one you need to ask for forgiveness. I pray thee, my sin, forgive my sin only this once and entreat the Lord, your God, that he may take away from me this death only.

As Pharaoh seeks repentance from a man not realizing his responsibility is to God. Pharaoh, who is refusing, remember that word there, unwilling, absolutely unwilling, refusing to humble himself is in a place of pride.

[29 : 00] Pride looks for a man to do what only God can do. Pharaoh is looking in the moment for sin to be removed. He was not looking at sin as an eternal problem but as a momentary problem. Hey, deliver this problem now.

Deliver this death only. Moses, and Moses then went out from Pharaoh and entreated the Lord.

Again, I think Moses, just go out and say, Lord, you know he's not going to change.

I mean, why am I entreating the Lord for Pharaoh in his false repentance? In spite of Pharaoh's lies and inconsistencies, Moses was continually consistent in mercy because God's mercy, we've said it many times, it's not dependent upon what?

It's not dependent upon our response, is it? It's not dependent upon man's response. Jesus would say in Luke 6, 28, bless them that curse you and pray for them which despitefully use you. How do you do that? How do you do that when someone doesn't want to receive your blessing?

How do you do it when you're trying to bless someone and they're cursing you? How do you do that when you say, let me pray for you and they despitefully use you? How do you do that? Because your response or your initiation is not based upon their response.

[30 : 11] Jesus, God continually shows forth love and grace and blessing. I mean, it doesn't matter if anyone receives it. It's still there. He's still the same yesterday, today, and forever. And God is very long-suffering, isn't he?

In his judgment with Pharaoh, his long-suffering has continued through plague 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. He's very long-suffering, but look how quick he is in his mercy. God is long in his suffering, but he is quick in his mercy, isn't he?

As soon as Pharaoh will show any bit of repentance, God's like, I'll work with that. Pharaoh, you might be tricking me, but I'm not going to trick you. You might be willing to change your mind, but I'm not going to change mine, Pharaoh.

If you want mercy, I'll give you mercy. If you want to repent, I'm there in a moment. And the Lord turned a mighty strong west wind, which took away the locusts and cast them into the Red Sea, and there remained not one locusts in all the coasts of Egypt.

There's an interesting proverb, Proverbs 30, verse 27, that says, the locusts have no king, yet they go forth, all of them by bands. They all stay together. It's the way God made them. So he swarms and then he moves them.

[31 : 14] I think it's interesting how he cast them into the sea. You know, they have no king, but they go forth ordered like to war. Like Pharaoh, don't go the way of the locusts, Pharaoh. That's the way you're headed, Pharaoh.

You and all your minions, you're headed that way, to the Red Sea. James 5, 16 tells us, confess your faults one to another, pray for one another, that you may be healed.

The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. And Moses, as he goes out and prays, overnight, God got rid of what was bugging the Egyptians. How easy it is for God to remove the thing that's bugging us too.

But what does he say here? You've got to ask. You've got to pray. You've got to ask. Confess your faults one to another and pray for one another. Was that like the Catholic thing, we've got to go to confession? Not at all.

Not at all. What it's saying is that God is able to heal. Internally, externally, he's able to heal the soul. He's able to take care of every issue. But listen, the way that very many times he's done that is through the body.

[32 : 14] He says, the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. Are you willing to pray yourself to the Lord? Lord, Lord, I need this in my life. Lord, I need to ask. Why haven't you done this?

And the Lord's like, well, why haven't you asked? Or maybe it's one of those things that you need to confess to say the same thing as confess means. Maybe you need someone else to come alongside you and say, is this right?

Could you pray for me? Can we say the same thing together before God on this? And they can pray for you and God can bring direction and healing. How easy it is for God to remove whatever's bugging us.

But we have to ask. And the Lord then hardened Pharaoh's heart. So all of the bugs flying, going to the Red Sea must have killed fishing for a few days. Or maybe it made it better.

They were all like really happy fish. But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart so that he would not let the children of Israel go. Well, wait a minute. Didn't Pharaoh just say, as we saw there, his false repentance again?

[33 : 10] Where he said, oh, I have sinned against your God and against you. And the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart. Remember, God is just confirming what Pharaoh's already affirmed. Pharaoh has affirmed for himself, I want nothing to do with you, God.

And God is simply confirming him in that. In Matthew 13, verse 15, Jesus said, for the hearts of this people have grown dull, hard.

Their ears are hard of hearing and their eyes have they closed. Darkness has encompassed them. Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and they should understand with their hearts and turn so that I should heal them.

That's not saying that Jesus is saying, well, I would heal them, but you know, oh well, it's not going to work. No. What he's saying is their response to God's word has simply confirmed them in this place where they cannot hear or see what the Lord is doing.

And the Lord said unto Moses, stretch out now your hand toward heaven. This is again, focusing upon heaven where this is coming from, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt.

[34 : 14] And this is the last of our plagues of the series of three where the third one is not announced. So the eighth one was announced, the ninth one here is not announced. Plague number nine, darkness, judgment is eternal and it's unannounced.

And that is on their sun god, Ra. I'm sure you've heard of the hymn before. And this is the first of two which has to do with life and death, dark and light, life and death, dealing with the death culture of Egypt, very focused on death.

They were the ones who mummified everything. They were the ones who have their gods that went with them into the afterlife. And this is judging their death. And the judgment is eternal. This is a picture of that darkness, a darkness that is more than just light.

Darkness that is more, I'm sorry, than just an absence of light, but a darkness which may be felt.

Sin does not just darken our physical sight, but brings a darkness that goes much deeper than what the physical perceives.

A darkness, a darkness that's felt, a darkness where you know. You can be in the lightest light. You can be Christmas time. You can be at Christmas. It can be happy and jolly and yet there's a darkness that you feel.

[35 : 25] There's a darkness that has nothing to do with an absence of light. And Moses stretched forth his hand towards heaven obediently to the Lord and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days.

So for three days, the land was in darkness. For three days, there was a judgment of darkness. And after three days of darkness, God would bring his final act of deliverance through judgment upon the firstborn.

Three days sitting in darkness to think upon their sin that they brought upon this world. In verse 23, and 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. They saw not one another nor rose from his place. There's a verse in Acts where Paul, if you remember when he has gone to, he's standing on Mars Hill and he's standing there before all the people and all their false gods and he sees the altar made to the unknown God and he begins to speak to them.

And he says, God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwells not in temples made with hands. Neither is worshipped with men's hands as though he needed anything, seeing he gives to all life and breath and all things, and is made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth and has determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation that they should seek the Lord.

[36 : 55] If happily, they might feel after him and find him, though he be not far from every one of us, for in him we live and move and have our being. The idea there is they might feel after him and they might grope about in the dark, that they might come upon him, that they might desire after him.

And I think of that with Egypt right now as all these Egyptians are sitting there in the dark, darkness they can feel. Nobody's moving and nobody's doing anything. There would be no rising from darkness until after the three days were accomplished.

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also you have received and wherein you stand, by which also you are saved, if you keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain.

For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that he was buried and that he arose again after three days of darkness according to the scriptures.

There would be no rising from this darkness until the three days were accomplished. Interesting though, because it was not dark. Where? Goshen, the land of drawing near.

[38 : 02] In the land of God's people, there was no darkness. If you're in Egypt and a darkness comes that you can feel and you can't see and you light a lamp and it does nothing, you know, I think maybe I'd try and make my way to Goshen.

Especially if I'm living on the border. Like, hey honey, I know if we walk out our door and go like 100 feet, we're going to be in the land of Goshen. What was a very dark day to the world was light to God's people, was life to God's people, right?

I wonder if you could see that darkness if you're in Goshen. If you looked over and it just looked like a big cloud or what it was. But just as the people of Egypt did not need to stay in the field when the hail came, they did not need to continue to stay in this land.

I think I would have been like, honey, get the kids. After the lice, we're going to Goshen. Let's get out of here. But there was light and life in the land of drawing near.

And Pharaoh called unto Moses and said, go serve the Lord. So this is after three days, obviously. Only let your flocks and your herds be stayed. Let your little ones also go with you.

[39 : 10] It's like, fine, men, women, and children, go. But just leave your stuff here. Keep your religion, Moses, in an acceptable way, Moses. I mean, that's fine.

You want to take the whole family to church? You do that. Go ahead. But like, you know, don't let it get into areas it shouldn't. Keep it compartmentalized. I mean, into the flocks and the herds. Leave them behind. You know, don't worry about that. That's not, what does that matter? That's just your hobby. That's not an area that church touches. That's not a church thing. Don't worry about that. It's Saturday.

That's not till tomorrow. Keep your religion acceptable. Keep it compartmentalized, Moses. And Moses said, no, Pharaoh, you must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings.

Look at the humility Moses has. Pharaoh, thou must give us. I wouldn't have been saying that. I've been like, Pharaoh, you can do your best. We're going to take our flocks, our herds, our little ones, and our wives, and we're going to get out of here. Try and stop us.

[40 : 06] Moses is still in humility. He says, Pharaoh, you must give. You must willingly do this. You must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God.

Scripture tells us that one day every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Willingly. No one's going to have a hand on their shoulder. The angels aren't going to be like, get down and bow. They're going to willingly see the God that they have rejected, the one they have pierced, and they will bow, and they will offer worship at that time.

It'll be too late for them to receive God's mercy because they've rejected it, but they will willingly own God for who he is. And Moses said, you must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God.

Moses said, we must be obedient to serve. Our cattle also shall go with us. There shall not be a hoof left behind, for therefore must we take to serve the Lord our God.

Moses said, we must be equipped to serve, and we know not with what we must serve the Lord until we come where he calls us. We must be prepared to serve. Moses said, we must be obedient to serve, we need to be equipped to serve, and we need to be prepared to serve.

[41 : 13] We don't know what God has for us. You know, the space he's given us here, it's such a blessing. We want to be obedient to serve. God, how do you want us to serve your people? How do you want us to meet the needs of your body, and then beyond that, how to be a light to the area around us?

So we want to be equipped. We want to be equipped spiritually. We want to be equipped with resources, and we also want to be prepared because we don't know what's next. That's why we do, like, things like tear apart the stage and things like that, to be prepared for what we believe God is doing, for the harvest we believe he's going to bring in to better equip and serve his people. But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go. Pharaoh wouldn't let them go. The Lord would not let Pharaoh go. He would not let him off the hook. Sorry, Pharaoh. The wages of sin is death.

There's consequence. There's a price to be paid, Pharaoh. I am not going to let you off the hook. And Pharaoh would not let God's people go. And Pharaoh said unto him, unto Moses, get you from me.

Take heed to yourself. Pharaoh's really ratcheting up the intensity here. He's had enough. You know, I've always thought that from the first plague onwards. Why doesn't he just try to take out Moses and Aaron? Maybe he did. Every time they come back, man, missed him again.

[42 : 27] He says, get thee from me. Take heed to yourself. See my face no more, for in that day you see it. For in that day you see my face, you shall die. Pride rejects and pride projects.

As Pharaoh here, his pride has blinded him to the reality of God's deliverance and God's deliverer, and he's projecting onto Moses now all the trouble that he's brought upon himself and upon this land.

Pride rejects and pride projects. He would not let God's people go, and then he projects upon, to Moses, all the trouble that he's brought upon himself. The enemy wrongly believes that he has power over death, as God is showing this here, over the God Ra.

He wrongly believes that it's within his hand. He assumes authority he does not have. Moses, you see my face again, I'm going to kill you. Does Moses see his face again? That's the question.

Moses said in verse 29, you've spoken well, I will see your face again no more.

Now, that could mean two things. Moses could say, you're right, I'm not coming back here again on my own, and Pharaoh calls him back later. In Exodus 12, 31, he called for Moses and Aaron by night and said, rise up, get you forth from among my people.

[43 : 39] Two chapters later, after the judgment upon the firstborn, he calls for them. He says, wait, I thought we weren't going to see his face anymore. Moses said, you won't see my face. Well, were they wrong? Does this just mean Moses said, well, I'm not coming back here on my own?

Or, look what it says, I love God's word. And he called for Moses and Aaron by night. Maybe they didn't see each other's face. Maybe he said, hey, get Moses and Aaron in here and just tell him to get out of here.

Maybe he didn't see his face. And Moses said, you are spoken well. I'll see your face again no more. I love the, just that you can hear in the text the difference in their personalities, their difference in their heart, where Pharaoh says, get you from me, take heed to yourself, see my face no more.

In the day you see it, you will die. And Moses just says, you've said, you've spoken the truth. I will see your face again no more. False confidence is a forced confidence.

Pharaoh is, has false confidence because of his pride, but it's a forced confidence. Oh, I'm in charge here. Where true confidence, true confidence is calmly assured and founded calm assurance.

[44 : 47] Be anxious for nothing but in everything. By prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. But the key is to do what? Let him know.

Speak to him. Spend time with him. And the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. And you can hear, you can hear Moses' voice through this. True confidence is found in calm assurance through God's word.

I don't need to be anxious for anything. God keeps my heart and mind. Pharaoh, Pharaoh, whatever. And so we come to the end of our plagues. Not all of them, like we said.

We've come through nine plagues. These nine plagues have been for a specific reason. We've looked at many different reasons, but each one God has a reason for.

And there's one left, but it's unique and must be considered by itself. But each of these plagues, there's a specific reason that God wants to answer a question for Pharaoh. Who is the Lord?

[45 : 46] As Pharaoh asked in Exodus 5-2. He wants to show the power of God through Moses, as he stated in Exodus 9-16. He wants to give a testimony to the children of Israel for their further generations as we read today.

To judge the false gods of Egypt, as he's going to eventually say in Exodus 12 and further out in Numbers. To warn the nations. Way out in 1 Samuel, he'll be talking about the Philistines and say, hey, I have warned you through what I did in Egypt generations ago.

And then lastly, as a testimony of the greatness of God to Israel. To Israel. That God's judgment is to show the greatness of his mercy to his people. Not to show how big and mean and bad he is.

We saw that God's judgment is all-encompassing and very specific, isn't it? It's very specific.

Moses, this is what I'm going to do. We're going to have a plague of blood in the water. We're going to have flies. We're going to have lice. We're going to have hail.

We're going to have... It's very specific. Very specific. And it was completely all-encompassing. There's no area that wasn't free of the frogs, free of the lice, and free of that. There is no escaping the effect of sin.

[46 : 55] The wages of sin is death. But just as God's judgment is all-encompassing and very specific, so is his mercy. All-encompassing and very specific.

The wages of sin is death. Sorry, it's that one. But the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus, our Lord. God's judgment is specific and all-encompassing, and just as specific and just as all-encompassing is God's mercy.

God's mercy is very specific. Whosoever should believe on the Lord Jesus Christ will be saved. Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord. We live in a day that, like Pharaoh, tries to convince us to be happy with compartmentalization, to be happy with compromise.

When God says, no, it's all-encompassing or nothing. Salvation is for the whole soul or it's not for any of it. It's going to touch your whole life or none of it.

We don't get that option. You're either moving to the Lord or moving away from him. We're either being exalted or put down. God is either confirming us in our obedience to him, to his word, or he's confirming us in our rejection of that.

[48 : 08] And how hard is it to obey, right? What do the disciples say? Well, Lord, tell us the work of God that we may do it. We don't want to be rejected. We don't want to be lost. And Jesus said, well, this is the work of God.

You might believe. You might believe on him whom he has sent. That's it. Just to believe. The deliverance that we have, Jesus came and took our guilt, our condemnation, and God's judgment fully encompassing.

Jesus said, it is finished as he hung upon that cross. Completely encompassing. All encompassing was God's judgment. Darkness covering the land, but light has come into the world. And in the same way, Jesus' life is all encompassing.

Yes, for salvation. As we said, we have a hope of resurrection that we'll experience beyond this life. We experience so much of it in this life, but the best is yet to come. But his salvation is also all-encompassing now.

Man, what's bugging you? What do you need to be healed? Who do you need to say, hey, could you pray with me? I need someone to say the same thing as. I need someone to confess with me.

[49 : 12] And not a confessing like, you know, like we said, confessing to a saint or confessing to one another like Pharaoh tried to do to Moses, and not even confessing like positive confession. But just to say the same thing.

God's word is telling me this. I need that in my life. And man, I need you to come alongside and do that with me. God is all-sufficient for that. And he wants to do that for us.

Father, thank you so much, Lord, for the all-encompassing truth of the word of God, the all-encompassing reality of sin. Lord, I hate sin, but I love that I'm a sinner because that puts me in a position to come under the judgment of God that I might come under the mercy of God.

No, I don't want to continue in sin. As Paul says, where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, but shall we continue in sin? God forbid. How shall we that are dead therein, dead to sin, continue any longer therein?

Know you not that so many of us as we're buried by baptism into Christ are raised with him. Lord, we don't want to focus on the sin. We don't want to focus on the death. We don't want to focus on the darkness, Lord, which is still very real and tangible in our lives, but we want to focus on the all-encompassing light of the world, Jesus, who rolled back our darkness, who took away our sin, and has given us life and has promised us that everything in this life, he will be Jehovah over.

[50 : 38] He will be sufficient for. This morning, as we look at your word and we see just the heartache, Lord, and the tragedy of a nation, a people, and a man who refused to humble themselves before you.

Lord, we live in a world where a nation, a people, and men refuse to humble themselves before you. But, Lord, you didn't stop showing your grace and your mercy.

Where Pharaoh said, okay, okay, okay, enough is enough. You said, all right, I am faithful to my word. I am faithful to show mercy. Lord, make us like that. Use us, Lord. And Peter said, well, Lord, if my brother sins against me, how many times do I forgive him?

Seven times? And Jesus said, not seven times, but 70 times seven. What does that mean? I just stand there and let him continue to smack me around? No, it just means God's heart of forgiveness never runs out. There never comes a point where he says, I'm sorry, I can't show you love anymore.

I can't show you grace, even for Pharaoh. Though he knew, Pharaoh, I'm sorry, you know it, Pharaoh. You want nothing to do with me, but that's not going to stop me from being loving. Lord, give us hearts like that.

[51 : 46] Fill us with your spirit. In Jesus' name, amen. Nine plagues now. You know, who's the hero of the story?

Well, the Lord is, but like, Moses is the deliverer, right? He's so behind the scenes. He's so subtle. He's just kind of there, speaking God's truth and bringing God's deliverance for God's people.

I was thinking how Jesus is just so subtly there in our lives, bringing his truth and bringing deliverance and it's sometimes easy to miss it because of like, what's going on in the world and what's Pharaoh doing and what's happening and how is God working?

And here he comes again, just walks in, gives God's message, walks out and the whole world is being affected. We have that same calm assurance that Jesus is working subtly but there in our lives.

We don't have to have like this forced confidence or, we have Jesus. We have that calm assurance to be anxious for nothing. If you need prayer, I would love to pray with you. Find someone to pray with you.

[52 : 55] Find someone to, to say the same thing as together and just say, let's go to the Lord together and let's, let's, let's get healing. Let's squash those bugs, whatever it is. The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you peace. God bless you. Amen. Amen.