

# Part 8: Scarabs, Livestock Death, Boils, Exodus 8:20-9:12

## **SERMON SERIES: EXODUS - FINDING FREEDOM** **Scarabs, Livestock Death, Boils Exodus 8:20-9:12**

**Devotion Emphasis: Obedience and Rebellion**

**MONDAY – God Wanted Obedience from the Pharaoh**

**Exodus 8:20-32** 20 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Rise up early in the morning and present yourself to Pharaoh, as he goes out to the water, and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. 21 Or else, if you will not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies on you and your servants and your people, and into your houses. And the houses of the Egyptians shall be filled with swarms of flies, and also the ground on which they stand. 22 But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where my people dwell, so that no swarms of flies shall be there, that you may know that I am the Lord in the midst of the earth. 23 Thus I will put a division between my people and your people. Tomorrow this sign shall happen.”’” 24 And the Lord did so. There came great swarms of flies into the house of Pharaoh and into his servants' houses. Throughout all the land of Egypt the land was ruined by the swarms of flies. 25 Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and said, “Go, sacrifice to your God within the land.” 26 But Moses said, “It would not be right to do so, for the offerings we shall sacrifice to the Lord our God are an abomination to the Egyptians. If we sacrifice offerings abominable to the Egyptians before their eyes, will they not stone us? 27 We must go three days' journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to the Lord our God as he tells us.” 28 So Pharaoh said, “I will let you go to sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness; only you must not go very far away. Plead for me.” 29 Then Moses said, “Behold, I am going out from you and I will plead with the Lord that the swarms of flies may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people, tomorrow. Only let not Pharaoh cheat again by not letting the people go to

**sacrifice to the Lord.” 30 So Moses went out from Pharaoh and prayed to the Lord. 31 And the Lord did as Moses asked, and removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people; not one remained. 32 But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and did not let the people go.**

How much easier would life have been for Pharaoh and the people of Egypt if Pharaoh would have yielded to God and let God’s people go? Even in the midst of his land being destroyed and being told what it would take to alleviate the devastation, Pharaoh chose to harden his heart and refused to submit to God. The Pharaoh wanted to be the god of his own life as well as the god of the Egyptians and Israelites. It was his pride that caused the downfall of Egypt. Instead of choosing to let go of his pride and obey the true God, Pharaoh intentionally fought against a power he could not win. Pharaoh’s hard heart caused his own downfall. In the same way God did not yield to the Pharaoh, God will never yield to us. Every possible battle against God is already lost.

**Worship Challenge: Who is the god of your life? We have been designed by the true God to worship and submit our lives to Him. Sin has corrupted us and drives us to submit to the wrong people and the wrong things. In many cases, we refuse to submit at all and take the throne of our own lives. God wants our obedience. Our following of Him proves our obedience to Him. Look at your life and the Bible today and determine if you are really living obediently to God or not. If you are living obediently to God, spend time praising Him for helping you submit your life to Him. If you are living in opposition to God, ask Him to soften your heart. Soft hearts are molded easily. Hard hearts cannot be molded and often must be shattered before they can be rebuilt.**

**Tuesday - The Pharaoh wanted options from God**

**Exodus 8:24-9:12 24 And the Lord did so. There came great swarms of flies into the house of Pharaoh and into his servants' houses. Throughout all the land of Egypt the land was ruined by the swarms of flies. 25 Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and said, “Go, sacrifice to your God within the land.” 26 But Moses said, “It would not be right to do so, for the offerings we shall sacrifice to the Lord our God are an abomination to the Egyptians. If we sacrifice offerings abominable to the Egyptians before their eyes, will they not stone us? 27 We must go three days' journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to the Lord our God as he tells us.” 28 So Pharaoh said, “I will let you go to sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness; only you must not go very far away. Plead for me.” 29 Then Moses said, “Behold, I am going out from you and I will plead with the Lord that the swarms of flies may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people, tomorrow. Only let not Pharaoh cheat again by not letting the people go to sacrifice to the Lord.” 30 So Moses went out from Pharaoh and prayed to**

the Lord. 31 And the Lord did as Moses asked, and removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people; not one remained. 32 But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and did not let the people go. 1 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. 2 For if you refuse to let them go and still hold them, 3 behold, the hand of the Lord will fall with a very severe plague upon your livestock that are in the field, the horses, the donkeys, the camels, the herds, and the flocks. 4 But the Lord will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt, so that nothing of all that belongs to the people of Israel shall die.”’” 5 And the Lord set a time, saying, “Tomorrow the Lord will do this thing in the land.” 6 And the next day the Lord did this thing. All the livestock of the Egyptians died, but not one of the livestock of the people of Israel died. 7 And Pharaoh sent, and behold, not one of the livestock of Israel was dead. But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go. 8 And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “Take handfuls of soot from the kiln, and let Moses throw them in the air in the sight of Pharaoh. 9 It shall become fine dust over all the land of Egypt, and become boils breaking out in sores on man and beast throughout all the land of Egypt.” 10 So they took soot from the kiln and stood before Pharaoh. And Moses threw it in the air, and it became boils breaking out in sores on man and beast. 11 And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils, for the boils came upon the magicians and upon all the Egyptians. 12 But the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he did not listen to them, as the Lord had spoken to Moses.

By the time the plague of the swarm came, Pharaoh had been commanded by God to let His people go multiple times! When the swarm of flies or scarabs came upon the land Pharaoh had the audacity to try to negotiate with God, telling Moses to have God’s people worship and make sacrifices within the land of Egypt. God proves once again that He is God and Pharaoh is not by uncompromising and unyielding to Pharaoh’s desires which leads to the plague of livestock death, the plague of excruciating boils, and God giving Pharaoh over to the hardness of his heart and further hardening it Himself! God is not a God of negotiation or bargaining. His will is not compromised.

**Discipleship Challenge:** It is human nature to try to negotiate in order to get what we want! We try to negotiate for better prices, better work environments, and what we want in our relationships. We are naturally driven to try to negotiate with God. Have you ever tried to make a deal with God that went something like this, “God if you do this, then I’ll do this?” God is a God of kindness and He blesses us abundantly but He is not commanded by us. It is much more appropriate to say, “God I would love to have this in life but even if I don’t get it, I will follow you.” Search your life today. What areas have you tried to negotiate with God? Repent of those things and make a decision to follow God whether you get what you want or not.

## Wednesday - Evidence of Obedience

**James 1:14-26** 14 What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? 17 So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. 18 But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! 20 Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; 23 and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”—and he was called a friend of God. 24 You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. 25 And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? 26 For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

Far too many people claim to be Christians. That statement is intentionally written to be cringe-worthy and challenging. The meaning of following Jesus and living the Christian life has largely been diluted and lost in our culture due to the amount of people claiming to be followers of Jesus who are not! Following Jesus actually requires obedience on our part. The evidence of our obedience to Jesus is found in the works we do for Him. Do not be mistaken. **Works do not save us but if we are saved we will do works as a result of our salvation.** If you were to say, “I am a guitar player!” I would say, “Great play a song for me!” If you responded, “Well I really can’t play any songs.” Then I would say, “Well, what makes you a guitar player then?” To say you are a follower of Jesus requires evidence of your following of Jesus! If there is no evidence, you are not following. If you are not following, you are not living obediently. If you are not living obediently, you are not following God as the God of your life. It’s that simple. Faith without works is dead.

**Discipleship Challenge:** What evidence in your life shows you have been saved by God? What works show you are living obediently to Him? The most foundational aspect of following Jesus is being a part and serving His church. What is your church involvement like? How are you serving the church? If you don’t have this foundational step of obediently living for God down, you are missing opportunities to follow further aspects of obedience! If you claim to be a Christian and actively being a part of the church is not a

**priority of your life, you are not living obediently or following God's will for your life. Choose today to make God's church a top priority in your life. If you are a part of the church but have not made a decision to serve, you are not following God's will for your life. If the church is a top priority in your life and you are actively serving, praise God for the many blessings He is surely bringing to you for your obedience to Him!**

**Thursday - Who do you follow?**

**Romans 10:9 Because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.**

The Egyptians created many false gods. They had well over 2000 different deities they made up and chose to follow. People have created countless false gods throughout history! Which Jesus do you follow? Odd question right? Well, the Bible says Jesus is the son of God who is fully God and fully man and the one who brings salvation. Mormons believe Jesus is the spirit brother of Satan. Jehovah's Witnesses believe Jesus is Michael the angel. The Da Vinci Code says Jesus married Mary Magdalene. Among the false created gods, there have been many false versions of Jesus created. It is much easier to corrupt the person of Jesus than we might imagine and we may be guilty of this sin without even realizing it. You see, when we don't like something God has for our lives we often change what He has told us to do in our minds to justify our disobedience. Sometimes we don't deliberately choose to rebel against God, we just choose to create and follow a different god, which is our own choosing to succumb to our own lies and deception. In reality, this is one of the many forms rebellion can in our lives can take. There is only one true God. When we claim to obediently follow God but change the words and commands He has spoken to us, we are not following the true God at all but a foolishly made up god of our own creation.

**Discipleship Challenge: What makes you a disciple of Jesus? A disciple strives to take on the attributes, character, and lifestyle of the master they follow. Are you actually following the God of the Bible? What areas of your thinking about God conflict with who God really is? Spend time thinking about God's commands to us and who the Bible reveals Him to be to us today. DO NOT LOOK OUTSIDE THE BIBLE FOR THIS CHALLENGE. When we don't look first to the Bible to understand who God is, we endanger ourselves of missing Him completely.**

**Friday - Rebellion or Obedience**

**Romans 10:14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?**

If you have been saved by God, you have been commanded by Him to reach others with the Gospel of Jesus. You might view this task as the ultimate blessing that you are excited for, or you might be intimidated by it and think you aren't qualified for it. Wherever you are emotionally about sharing the Gospel, God is commanding you to do it! How will those you know hear about Jesus if you don't tell them? How will they believe if you don't open their eyes to Jesus? How will they experience the blessing of God's church if you don't bring them into it? God has told you to reach them. Will you rebel against Him or follow in obedience?

**Evangelism Challenge: Share this week's sermon and devotion on your Facebook page and encourage others to listen to the message and read the devotion! Social media is a great tool you can use to expose others to Jesus and truth. After you do this, invite someone to church on Sunday!**

*Orchard Student Ministries Pastor – **Shane Hicks***