

EXODUS

THE GOD WHO SAVES, SPEAKS, &
SETTLES WITH HIS PEOPLE

Shelter in the Storm

Exodus 8:20-9:12



Introduction

The aftermath of a tornado is striking. On one side of the street there is devastation and disaster, but the other side of the street can look perfectly normal. One side is a pile of ruins, but the neighbors across the street didn't seem to lose much more than their garden gnome. This is how the Israelites must have felt during these three plagues. All around them there was devastation but they were unaffected by God's judgment. It is a picture of those who cling to Christ. We are spared from the judgment of God. In fact, we are saved through judgment. God saves His people by judging Christ in our place and then judging the world who rejects and persecutes His church. It is easy to get caught up in the visuals of these plagues, but don't lose sight of the main point of these three plagues – God is sparing His people from His judgment.



Study

Context: In some of the plagues that occur prior to these the impact is in some sense diminished because the Egyptian magicians are able to replicate them, albeit on a smaller scale. However, this is not the case in these plagues (9:11). The plagues that follow are a heightened demonstration of judgment, as God begins to reverse His good gift of creation.

Background: Various terms are used to describe what God brought upon Egypt: “plague” (9:3), “sign” (7:3), “wonder” (4:21), and “act of judgment” (7:4). God demonstrated His power through the plagues so that “the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD” (7:5). A secondary purpose is judgment on the Egyptians for their acts of injustice toward God's people.

Structure:

- I. The Fourth Plague: Flies – Egyptians Judged but Israel Spared (8:20-32)
- II. The Fifth Plague: Death of Livestock – Egyptians Judged but Israel Spared (9:1-7)
- III. The Sixth Plague: Boils – Egyptians Judged but Israel Spared (9:8-12)



Reflect

The Fourth Plague: Flies – Egyptians Judged but Israel Spared (8:20-32)

1. Read 8:21-24 carefully. What happens to the Egyptians and what happens to the Israelites?

Note: Goshen is the land on the eastern part of the Delta region.

APPLY → Exodus 8:21-24 is a picture of human history and eternity. There are two very different tracks for those who belong to God (“my people”) and those who belong to the Pharaohs of this world (“your people”). Reflect a bit on belonging to God. What does this produce in your heart?

2. What reason does the Lord give for sparing His people from the plagues in 8:22?

3. What is Pharaoh's response to the plague in 8:25-32? What seems odd about his response (see 8:28 and 8:32)?

APPLY → Sinful human beings are complex. Like Pharaoh, unbelievers will appear open at times and hard hearted other times. What sense can we make out of this flip-flopping in their understanding of God?

The Fifth Plague: Death of Livestock – Egyptians Judged but Israel Spared (9:1-7)

4. What does the Lord say He will do this time if Pharaoh does not let the people go? There is a similarity between 9:4 and something God said during the previous plague. What is it?

5. Read 8:32 and 9:4. What are the differences and similarities?

6. Read Romans 1:18-25. How do these verses, especially 1:18 and 1:24, help us understand what is going on in Pharaoh's heart?

APPLY → Romans 1 talks about people refusing God and then God giving them over to the lusts already in their hearts. God gives them what they want just as He did with Pharaoh. How do you see these dynamics still at work in the world?

Sixth Plague: Boils – Egyptians Judged but Israel Spared (9:8-12)

7. What do you think the Lord is trying to accomplish with this plague? What can you find in the verses to support this?



Connect

Gospel Connections. It is in Christ that we are spared from the wrath of God. Christ was treated as God's enemy in our place so that we could become part of God's family. God said to Pharaoh "Thus I will put a division between my people and your people" (Ex. 8:23). In Christ we are on the right side of that division.

Whole-Bible Connections. One day Jesus will return and there will be a great separation of people into their eternal dwelling places. Read Jesus' words about what He will do when He returns:

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.... Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'" (Matt. 25:31-34, 41).

Theological Connections. The doctrine of election is a wonderfully comforting teaching. The Bible teaches that before the world was created God chose certain people to bring into saving fellowship with Christ not because of anything about them or in them but because He loved them (John 15:16, 17:2-24; Acts 13: 48; Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 1:3-6; 1 Thess. 1:4-5). In election God chooses who will be His people. In the plagues we see election played out. The little land of Goshen filled with God's chosen ones was spared from the judgment of God (Ex. 8:22).