

Exodus 030  
Ultimate Victory  
Exodus 8:30-32  
January 11, 2026  
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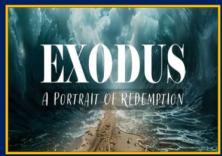
Let us take our Bibles this morning and open them to Exodus 8:30. We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through the Book of Exodus. The title of our message this morning is "The Ultimate Victory." You could translate it this way: God wins. All right, let us close in prayer. The nice thing about God winning is that you win too. You may not think you are a winner or feel like a winner, but as you will see today, you are a winner.

The Book of Exodus is about the redemption of a nation from cruel bondage for 400 years under the hands of a Pharaoh that knew not Joseph. God heard the cries of His people, the nation of Israel, and their 400-year time of bondage was coming to an end.

God, as He typically does, raised up an instrument through which He will work. In this case, it is this man named Moses. Who reaches the apex of his ministry at the ripe old age of 80—age 80 to age 120. As we like to say, "Katy bar the door." At a time when most people are ready to retire God says to Moses, "It is time to refire." God has prepared this man, and now he, along with his brother Aaron, are doing the will of God as they are being used by God to rain down judgments upon this Egyptian power that was persecuting and enslaving His people.

We have seen the Nile turned to blood. We have seen frogs and gnats. We are in the midst of flies multiplied over all over Egypt. You might be saying to yourself, "I cannot wait till we are finished with Exodus 8. Exodus 9 must be better." No, Exodus 9 is going to be the death of livestock, boils, and hail. Then the chapter after that there will be locusts. Not exactly seeker-friendly teaching, I guess, but these are the lengths that God went to to redeem His people.

TEN PLAGUES REDEMPTION (7:14–12:30)

<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Nile to blood</li><li>2. Frogs</li><li>3. Gnats</li><li>4. <b>Flies</b></li><li>5. Death of livestock</li><li>6. Boils</li><li>7. Hail</li><li>8. Locusts</li><li>9. Darkness</li><li>10. Death of 1st born</li></ol>	
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We are there on number four, Exodus 8:20-32, the judgment of the flies. God has instructed Moses in terms of what he is to do. Once he does this, God is going to perform this miracle of the multiplication of flies. The prophecy, as it always happens, is fulfilled. Flies multiply all over Egypt, and Pharaoh has a second look on this.

Pharaoh says, "I will let you go. But you know what? You cannot leave the borders of Egypt," which is really not being let go. When you think about it, it is like telling your kids you can go on vacation, but do not leave the backyard. Moses cannot agree with that, because part of being let go from Egypt is to offer sacrifices unto the Lord in the wilderness.

That is a problem because the Egyptians worshiped animals. They were the ultimate animal lovers. I have two cats at home. I have to admit, I have become an animal lover myself. Animal worshiper? Not so much. Not at all. Animal stewardship, I think, is a good thing, but these people actually worshiped animals. A lot of cultures are like that. They are starving to death when filet mignon roams the streets. "We cannot kill that animal because that could be Uncle Fred or Uncle Joe, reincarnated from a prior life." It is interesting how Christianity frees up civilizations from the destruction that they find themselves in.

Moses says to Pharaoh, "You have to let us leave Egypt, and we want to leave for three days," which is a minimal request. Pharaoh says, "You can do that." Moses says, "You better not be lying to me." Pharaoh says, "I am not lying. Scout's honor, but I have got my fingers crossed behind my back." He is let go. Pharaoh says, "I just have one condition: put in a good word for me with the man upstairs, would you, that these flies will stop."

### Flies (Exodus 8:20-32)

- I. God Instructs Moses (20-23)
- II. Prophetic Fulfillment (24)
- III. Pharaoh's Concession (25-29)
- IV. Moses' Response (30-32)
  - A. Exit (30a)
  - B. Supplication (30b)
  - C. God answers (31)
  - D. Pharaoh's response (32)
    - 1. Self hardening (32a)
    - 2. Double cross (32b)

We finished this chapter about the flies with Moses' response. We see his exit (Exodus 8:30); his supplication unto the Lord (Exodus 8:30); you watch God answering a prayer there (Exodus 8:31); and then you see Pharaoh's response, which will be a sinful response (Exodus 8:32).

Notice first of all, Moses' Exodus from Egypt just for three days in Exodus 8:30:

*"So Moses went out from Pharaoh..." (Exodus 8:30).*

Go back to Exodus 8:26. That is when Pharaoh said, "You can stay here in Egypt to do your sacrifice." You remember the response of Moses then. It says:

*"But Moses said, 'It is not right to do so, for we will sacrifice to the Lord our God what is an abomination to the Egyptians. If we sacrifice what is an abomination to the Egyptians before their eyes, will they not stone us?'" (Exodus 8:26).*

"I have to leave Egypt to fulfill God's will."

The truth of the matter is all of us need to leave Egypt. When you think about it, we cannot fulfill the will of God while we are ingrained in paganism and a pagan lifestyle. God's judgment is always to call us out.

*"Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate,' says the Lord. 'And do not touch what is unclean; And I will welcome you." (2 Corinthians 6:17).*

Ephesians 5:11 says, *"Do not participate."* The word "participate" is where we get our word "fellowship," "koinonia."

*"Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead expose them" (Ephesians 5:11).*

As a Christian, I am not to cooperate with sin. I am to expose it. That is my function and your function as a child of light.

When Babylon falls in the last days, this announcement will be given:

*"I heard another voice from heaven, saying, 'Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate [fellowship] in her sins and receive her plagues'" (Revelation 18:4).*

God is always saying, "Come out, be separate." The problem many times is that we do not do that. Then we wonder why our lives and our ministries are not having the impact that they could have.

You remember the story of Lot. Lot, in Genesis 13, pitched his tent towards Sodom and then a little bit later he was sitting in the city gates of Sodom (Genesis 19). He had arisen to a place of importance within the city of Sodom, and he is the one that offered—it is just hard for me to believe someone doing this, but it is in your Bible and my Bible—he offered his own daughters to a sodomite crowd, as some way to appease their sexual appetites. This was Lot, who actually was a believer.

What do you do with a guy like that? He is a backslidden believer. It became time for him to get serious when the angel said, "Get out of here, I am going to destroy this place." Lot went to warn his relatives, and by the time he started warning his relatives about what was true—"You have to leave Sodom because God is going to destroy it—his relatives thought he was jesting. He had lost his credibility.

*"Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, and said, 'Up, get out of this place, for the Lord will destroy the city.' But he appeared to his sons-in-law to be jesting" (Genesis 19:14).*

"There he goes again, joking around." How do you take a guy seriously that speaks truth when he does not have a lifestyle that backs up his rhetoric? This is why the Bible is always saying, "Come out and be separate." It is not so much change of locality because you cannot physically leave the world until the Rapture happens.

Until that time comes or until death, we are in this world. The Bible teaches that we are in the world, but not of the world. Jesus in John 17 verse 15, as He was praying for us in the Upper Room, says:

*"I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one" (John 17:15).*

In the world, but not of the world.

Paul in 1 Corinthians 5:9-11 says,

*"I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; I did not at all mean the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of the world. But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler—not even to eat with such a one" (1 Corinthians 5:9-11).*

Paul says, "I do not have a lot of control over interacting with people that have a different value system from what I have in this world. I could not go to the bank, I could not watch the news on TV. There are a number of things I could not do. But here is what I can control: I can control whether or not I am going to enter into some partnership, some camaraderie, or intimacy with the unsaved or even people that name the name of Christ that are moving in more of a worldly direction. That I have control over."

Many times we are deceived into thinking that I have to push myself into some kind of relationship with a worldly person, because I am going to fix them. It is like standing on a chair and you are trying to pull someone up on a chair. If you are standing on a chair trying to pull someone up and they are trying to pull you down, we know who is going to win. The person trying to pull you off the chair is going to be more effective and

successful in their endeavor because they have the law of gravity on their side. You do not.

This becomes the danger of a Christian like Lot becoming like the world system around us. You go into situations. Lot probably went into Sodom and Gomorrah thinking he was going to change Sodom and Gomorrah, and it was Sodom and Gomorrah that changed him. Even when Lot was removed from Sodom and Gomorrah, it is one thing to take the man out of Sodom and Gomorrah, but it was a completely different matter to take Sodom and Gomorrah out of Lot. He got involved with an incestuous relationship with his two daughters, if you can imagine such a thing, in a drunken state after Sodom and Gomorrah had been obliterated by God with fire and brimstone. This is the danger of the compromised life.

I remember when I was teaching locally, we had a moral spill, or a failing of somebody, that was fairly high up in the organization at the time. I remember one of the board members talking to us as faculty, using this as an example. He said, "You cannot negotiate with sin. You cannot barter with sin. You cannot contain sin. The best thing you can do is to remove yourself from sin." Sin is a far more powerful element than most of us are willing to acknowledge.

If sin was not the power that it is, then why would Jesus have to go to such great lengths through His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension to redeem us? If He is going to go to those lengths to redeem us, then there must be something very captivating about sin, pernicious about sin. Sin must be far more powerful than I can imagine.

We need to follow the admonitions and exhortations and commands of the Bible to not let sin reign in our mortal bodies, that we obey its lusts (Romans 6:12). God has given us permission and the power and the resources to say no to sin and to replace sinful behaviors and lifestyles with things that God would want us to replace those things with (Romans 6). God does not just say no, He says better. "I have a better use of your mind than that. I have a better use of your time and mind than that. I have a better use of your mouth, your tongue than that, which is so easily prone, given over to gossip than that. I want to use your mouth, and I want to use your tongue as a tool of edification."

Moses here leaves Egypt, and we need to do the same thing. When we become just like Egypt, we lose our authority to speak to Egypt. When Lot became just like the citizens of Sodom and Gomorrah, he lost his authority to speak. He lost his pulpit. He lost his platform. He lost his credibility. We speak best to the fallen world and culture around us when our value system is different. We march to the beat of an entirely different drum. Moses' agenda is to leave Egypt.

Ed Hindson writes this in his commentary:

"For Moses, putting distance between the Egyptians and the Hebrews for their sacrifice was a nonnegotiable point."<sup>1</sup>

I say we need to start developing some nonnegotiables as Christians. What a great way to think about the New Year. "I am not going to do that. I am not going to go there. I am not going to have that. I am not going to laugh at that anymore. I am not going to go on the computer and watch that anymore." Whatever the issue is. "I am not going to spend the resources of the Lord on that. I am going to yield to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in terms of my development and in terms of my growth." Watch the Lord start to honor those commitments, giving us the power to say no and starting to use our lives in ways that we could not imagine before.

Moses leaves Egypt and he does as he promised—he makes a supplication for Pharaoh. You see in the second part of Exodus 8:30, which says:

*"So Moses went out from Pharaoh and made supplication to the Lord"  
(Exodus 8:30).*

The interesting thing about Pharaoh is that he will not submit to God, as we are going to see here, but he knows where these plagues are coming from. They are coming from God. Unbelievers are a lot like that. They have no interest in submitting to God, but it is interesting that when they get into trouble and something happens to them beyond their circumstances, you are the first person they call because they know that you have a relationship to God that they do not have. It is an instinctive, intuitive knowledge. Even though they do not have any real interest until the Lord deals with them in submitting to Him.

This is how Pharaoh is treating Moses. "Moses, I am going to let you go for three days. Go, go! Leave the borders of Egypt. Do your sacrifice. But can you pray for me in my circumstances? These flies have been multiplied all over Egypt and I need them to stop."

You notice that Moses honors the request. The request was given at the end of Exodus 8:28:

*"Pharaoh said, 'I will let you go, that you may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness; only you shall not go very far away. Make supplication for me'" (Exodus 8:28).*

The second part of Exodus 8:30 says:

*"So Moses went out from Pharaoh and made supplication to the Lord"  
(Exodus 8:30).*

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<sup>1</sup> Hindson, E. E., & Mitchell, D. R., eds. (2010). *KJV Bible Commentary for Today: The Most Up-to-Date Commentary on the Time-Honored Text of the KJV* (p. 93).

Notice that word "supplication" reading the Hebrew translation from the New American Standard Bible, which is an English translation. It translates it as "supplication." There is a very special kind of prayer called the prayer of supplication. You recognize in the word "supplication" the word "supply." When you pray a prayer of supplication, you are asking the Lord to supply a need in your life, or in Moses' case, in the life of somebody else, Pharaoh.

Paul the Apostle calls certain prayers, prayers of supplication in Philippians 4:6. This is a verse that helps me sleep at night. There are many nights that I go to bed, and I cannot sleep because my mind is filled with one anxious thought after another. I think to myself, "How in the world am I ever going to get to sleep?" My mind is so active. I cannot tell you how many times this verse has put me to sleep. One thing that puts me to sleep sometimes is that I listen to my own sermons. That puts me to sleep pretty quickly. Philippians 4:6 puts me out like a light. Here is what it says. It is just a verse you can memorize.

*"Be anxious for nothing—" (Philippians 4:6).*

Wow. Not even finances? Not even health? Not even the future? Not even our children and grandchildren? Anxiety is basically uncertainty that we experience. Because you are uncertain about a result, your emotions have been stirred up. For a long time as a Christian, I did not understand that anxiety is one of the greatest sins a Christian can commit against God. Yet when you study the issue of anxiety through the Bible, you will see that it is a sin and it is because you are violating a biblical command when we are anxious and worried.

Why is it a sin? Because I know this much: when I am anxious, I am not trusting God; when I am trusting God, I am not anxious. The Bible says, "Without faith, it is impossible to please Him" (Hebrews 11:6). I know categorically that I am not walking in faith when my mind is filled with anxiety.

What do you do when you have all of these anxious thoughts? Philippians 4:6 says:

*"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God" (Philippians 4:6).*

So many times I cannot sleep because I am anxious about something. The Holy Spirit says, "Philippians 4:6." I will sit there in the quietness of my own thoughts, and I will rehearse the verse in my mind and I will do what it tells me to do. I do not do this perfectly, and I do not do it all the time. I am ashamed, but when I do it, it is 100% effective, 100% of the time. I take whatever concern is bothering me and I turn that over to the Lord. You would not believe what that will do for your sleep pattern.

That is the kind of prayer that we are to pray, a supplication, asking God to supply a need. Paul says this in Philippians 4:19, which is just a few verses later:

"And my God will supply some of your needs—" Oh, no. It does not say that.

*"And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).*

God has a pretty big spiritual bank account, physical bank account. He owns the cattle on a thousand hills. He is completely capable of meeting some minor need in my life, so I give that to the Lord. We learn that He wants to supply all of our needs. It does not say our greeds. I wish it said that, but it says our needs. We can trust God with our needs, and we turn those over to the Lord. When you start turning those over to the Lord, now you are trusting the Lord. You are walking by faith. As you walk by faith, you will watch the level of worry and fear and anxiety start to disappear, maybe not perfectly, but it certainly does not have the foothold it used to have when we do this consistently.

We are told in the Lord's Prayer to present our needs to the Lord. There is a prayer in the Bible called the Lord's Prayer, which really is not the Lord's Prayer because the Lord never prayed this prayer. One of the lines in the prayer is: *"And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors"* (Matthew 6:12). That would not apply to Jesus because He is perfect.

If you are looking for the Lord's Prayer, you do not find it in Matthew 6, you find it in John 17 where Jesus is praying to the Father on our behalf. That is really the Lord's Prayer, the High Priestly Prayer. This prayer in Matthew 6, called the Lord's Prayer, is really the Disciples' Prayer. It is an amazing prayer. It is a prayer about the coming of the Kingdom.

There are three different ways the Kingdom is described. The key line in it is Matthew 6:10. We are to pray: *"Your kingdom come."* I cannot wait for the Kingdom to come, because this world is in a mess. We will talk in a minute about the ultimate victory. Then as you keep reading it talks about praying for the needs that we have until the Kingdom materializes, the thousand-year Kingdom.

One of the things that we are to pray for is in Matthew 6:11, where it says: *"Give us this day our daily bread."* Once the Kingdom comes, you will not have to pray that prayer, because agricultural prosperity will break out all over planet Earth. In the meantime, there are famines, there are shortages, there are higher gas prices, there are interest rates, there is inflation, there are layoffs, there are recessions and depressions. In that circumstance, as we are waiting for the Kingdom to come when all economic needs will be met—we are not in the Kingdom now—one of the things that we are to pray is this prayer of supplication. *"Lord, I need my needs met."* It is completely acceptable and legitimate to pray that. Jesus actually tells us to pray what I like to call the Disciples' Prayer.

Moses leaves Egypt. He prays this prayer of supplication on behalf of Pharaoh. Guess what? In Exodus 8:31, God answers. Sometimes we pray and we really do not think God will answer. I remember as a new Christian the first time God answered one of my

prayers. The answer was so fast and it was so specific and it happened so quickly, I almost did not believe that it was happening because I had approached God with this mindset that it is just me down here. I am a little worm.

We get into worm theology. "I know that you are not concerned about me," not understanding that we are a kingdom of priests, that God has made us into a kingdom of priests. A priest is someone that has access to God. That is who you are as a Christian, but a lot of times we do not operate through correct theology, and we have this worm theology. Then we pray something, not thinking that God is going to do anything about it, and all of a sudden it gets answered and we surely feel stupid. "Lord, why did I ever doubt You? You tell me to pray the prayers of supplication. I should not be shocked if You answer those prayers according to Your will and Your timing."

Exodus 8:31 is a description of that. It says:

*"The Lord did as Moses asked" (Exodus 8:31).*

Moses did not demand. He did not come to God acting like he was entitled to have his prayer request answered. He did not command God. This is the whole error of the positive confession movement—"name it and claim it." I like to call it "blab it and grab it." It is this idea that you can actually make God your cosmic bellhop through verbal laws, because you are a little god. That is what they say. They teach this round the clock on so-called Christian television.

I do not know how it is now since I do not watch Christian television anymore. I already have enough gray hairs on my head. Back in the day they would teach this doctrine of positive confession—health and wealth—that you are somehow the child of a king, so God is your slave. "That is not how you pray." They would teach that if you say it the right way and access these verbal laws, then God was mandated to answer you. If God did not answer you, then you do not have enough faith. That is what they would say.

If you are in a wheelchair because of a physical disability—like Joni Eareckson Tada, if you know her story—and you pray the right way, you are supposed to be healed. She never got healed. A lot of people have come to her saying, "You do not have enough prayer. You do not have enough faith." Do you realize how destructive that is to a person? When you tell someone that already has an obvious physical limitation that they are there because of their own unbelief, that is like double jeopardy. They are not only in the wheelchair, but they are being condemned for putting themselves in the wheelchair.

Ideas have consequences. We do not command God. We do not tell God what to do. We ask in faith, trusting Him with the results. Moses asked God; he petitioned God. It says there in Exodus 8:31:

*"The Lord did as Moses asked, and removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants and from his people; not one remained"*  
*(Exodus 8:31).*

Look how comprehensive this answer is: *"Not one remained."* God has not always answered every single one of my prayer requests in my life, but let me tell you, when the answer comes, it is comprehensive. Oftentimes the answer is bigger than something I even prayed for in the first place. It is like God dealing with Solomon. God said to Solomon, "What do you want?" He said that to Solomon in a vision. If God said that to you in a vision, "What do you want? I will do it." Solomon said, "I want wisdom in terms of how to govern Your people." God answered and said, "Because you did not ask for other things like riches, victory, and war, a long life, the death of your enemies, I am going to give you that stuff anyway." Solomon got the wisdom and he got a bunch of other stuff that he never even requested. God is able to do above and beyond. The Book of Ephesians says even that which we can think of, hope for, request (Ephesians 3:20).

Moses offers this prayer request and God answers. The answer is very comprehensive because all of the flies that had multiplied all over Egypt, that obviously bothered Pharaoh because he says, "Do something for me on this, can you? Put in a word." God answers in such a massive, comprehensive manner.

Do you believe God answers prayer? Do you believe prayer is powerful? Let me tell you something: the thing that the devil would love to bring forth in your life is to get you busy with anything and everything other than prayer. Satan knows that when we actually pray, that is where the power comes from, because you are moving the hand of God according to His will.

*"The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much"*  
*(Ephesians 5:16).*

James gives an example in the next verse:

*"Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit" (James 5:17-18).*

Do you mean this guy Elijah simply through prayer could alter weather? He could alter meteorology? He must have been some kind of superhuman to do that. What does the verse say? It says: *"Elijah was a man with a nature like ours"* (James 5:17). He was a typical guy that put his pants on one leg at a time, his shoes on one foot at a time, just like the rest of us. There was nothing cosmic or supernatural about this man. He had a relationship with the Lord, and he took advantage of it. He prayed for things. Many times the answers were just above and beyond what you would think God would do for a mere mortal man, because God honors prayer.

Jesus, in Luke 18, told a parable of a judge that did not fear God, did not fear man. A great guy, right? He does not fear God or man, and he is a judge. This widow kept petitioning him over and over again, and he finally yielded to her petition, this unjust judge, because the lady was wearing him out and he wanted her to go away. "Okay, I will give you what you want. Just leave me alone."

Jesus says this in this parable, "If that is how an unjust judge responds to consistent petitions, what do you think your heavenly Father is going to do who has a perfect nature and is not in it for Himself, as this unjust judge apparently was? How much more?" It is the argument from the lesser to the greater. How much more do you think God is going to answer your prayer requests and honor consistency and prayer?

I know in my life one of the great sins is giving up on praying for things; giving up on people; giving up on salvoes of people; saying, "Such-and-such or So-and-so will never trust the Lord." We quit praying. The Lord is saying, "Why are you giving up so quickly? Do you not know who you are dealing with here? You are dealing with God."

This is how Jesus prefaces this whole parable that He told in Luke 18. There in Luke 18:1, the King James Version reads as follows:

*"And He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1, KJV).*

We can get so tired and weary, weary in this world. Jesus says, "Do not. Do not faint, do not quit, do not give up. Do not tune out and drop out, as the 60s saying went. Do not quit, but pray. Do not be despondent, but pray. Do not give in to fatigue, but pray." That is what Moses did. He is not even praying for himself; he is praying for God's opponent here, as the story of the Book of Exodus is unfolding and God comes through.

*"This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us" (1 John 5:14).*

"Do you mean that if my prayer is aligned with God's will, it will be answered?" That is what the Bible teaches. The problem with us is that sometimes we ask amiss. We ask for things outside of His will.

*"You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures" (James 4:3).*

The things that I ask for that are outside of His will, God has no obligation to answer. Thank God for that. The worst thing that could ever happen to a person is for you to get a bunch of stuff that God knows is going to destroy you. God loves you too much to see that happen to you. He will withhold answers. They are not so much no's, but it is more of the idea of better. There is something better for you.

There is actually a lot of truth to that. I can give you a lot of examples from my life where I prayed and prayed and prayed for something and no answer. You look back 10 to 15, or 20 years later and you say, "Thank God that did not happen, because I could not have handled that. I could not have navigated that. I was praying for something that was way beyond my character development at the time. Thank you, Lord, for not answering that prayer."

It is like when your five-year-old wants the keys to the Ferrari. We know how that story will probably end up—assuming you own a Ferrari, and if you do not own a Ferrari, I do not think you can command God to give you a Ferrari.

*"If we ask anything according to His will, He hears us" (1 John 5:14).*

That raises an interesting question: How do you know what His will is? To my mind, there is only one way to know. It is in Romans 12:2, which says:

*"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:2).*

If God answers prayers according to his will, how do I know His will? He needs your mind to be transformed. How do you get your mind transformed when the world is seeking to squeeze us into its mold? The Word of God changes your mind. The more you study the Word of God, the more you are going to understand the will of God. It is all revealed in His Word. The more you put yourself in positions, like we would like to think at this church, where the Word of God is consistently taught, the better you will understand the mind of God and the will of God. Therefore you will have a better understanding of how to pray.

The Bible is filled with examples where people's prayers were launched because of their understanding of God's Word. Prayer and the Word go together. That is what the early church said:

'It is not right for us to leave the Word and prayer to wait on tables'" (Acts 6:2-4)

The apostles said, "Word and prayer." Prayer and the word go together; it is a relationship. God talks to you through His word, and you talk to God through prayer. It is not a one-way conversation where you pray and pray and pray, but never listen. Neither do you listen and listen and listen and study and study and study, but never pray. If it is not two ways, that is not much of a conversation. It really is no conversation; it is not much of a relationship. It is like being around someone and they want to monopolize all the talking, or they are so passive and quiet that they let you do all the talking. That is not a conversation. A conversation is two ways—you are talking to God through prayer and He is talking to you through His word.

What is Christianity at the end of the day? It is a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. That is why Matthew 7 says:

*"I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness"*  
(Matthew 7:23).

"I never had a relationship with you," is what He is saying.

Our relationship to the Lord is bride to groom, groom to bride. That is relational. Relationship is conversation. If someone comes to me for marital counseling, the first question I am going to ask is, "What is your level of communication like between the two of you? Do you communicate with each other like a married couple, or are the two of you just roommates?" Communication is the lifeblood of any relationship.

Daniel 9:2 through four exemplifies this. Daniel 9, by the way, is one of the three greatest prayers in the Post-exilic era. It is easy to remember where they are in the Bible. They are all located in a chapter 9: Nehemiah 9, Ezra 9, and Daniel 9. Those are the three greatest prayers in the era when the nation was out of the captivity and back in the land, when the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Zechariah, Haggai, that whole era of history was unfolding as they were seeking to rebuild the temple that Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed earlier. There are three great prayers of that time period, and they are all in chapter 9 of the Bible. If you were to go home today and you were to read those three chapters, you would know so much about prayer—Ezra 9, Nehemiah 9, Daniel 9.

*"In the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years. So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the Lord my God and confessed and said, 'Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and loving kindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments'" (Daniel 9:2-4).*

You can keep on reading that chapter, and you will see the power, the purpose, and the appropriateness of prayer. Why did Daniel even start to pray? Because he was in the word. He was studying Jeremiah, who was interestingly, a near contemporary of Daniel, although Jeremiah lived a little earlier. Daniel was studying two verses in the Book of Jeremiah—Jeremiah 25:11 and Jeremiah 29:10. Those verses told Daniel that the captivity is going to last 70 years. Daniel could look at a clock, or a calendar in his case, and he knew what time it was. The 70-year captivity was ending, so he started to pray. The reason he started to pray is because he understood the word.

*"If we ask anything according to His will, He hears us" (1 John 5:14).*

The will of God is revealed in the Word of God.

Look at Pharaoh's response. The flies stopped, and do you think Pharaoh would repent in sackcloth and ashes? No, sir. Look at how he hardens himself in Exodus 8:32:

*"but Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also" (Exodus 8:32).*

Do you see the word "God" there? Do not say yes, because it is not there. God is not hardening Pharaoh's heart. Pharaoh is hardening his own heart. God predicted that Pharaoh would harden his own heart. God is not going to harden Pharaoh's heart until we get to the boils in Exodus 9:12.

*"And the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not listen to them, just as the Lord had spoken to Moses" (Exodus 9:12).*

What is going on with this guy, Pharaoh? He is on dangerous ground, because he is hardening his own heart against God. God allows people to do that to a point where God finally says, "That is enough. I will give you over to what you want. I will cement the decision you have already made." I say to the Lord, "I do not ever want to be in that circumstance." I do not ever want to go so far in my sin and rebellion that God finally just gives me over to what I want. It is like the the days of Noah where God says:

*"My spirit will not strive with man forever, for he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years" (Genesis 6:3).*

Those are some frightening words: *"My Spirit will not strive with man forever."* I say to the Lord, "Lord, keep striving, keep working on me. Even when I stumble, fall, and blow it, keep me in this place where I am pliable, where I do not get so entrenched in something that I just push God out." I do not want to be like that.

"Not until the sixth plague does God participate in the confirmation of Pharaoh's own volitional choices."<sup>2</sup>

"Seven times Pharaoh hardened his own heart before God first hardened it, though the prediction that God would do it preceded all."<sup>3</sup>

God predicted that Pharaoh would harden his heart. Pharaoh does it repeatedly.

Then you get to Exodus 9:12, some of the most frightening words in the Bible, to be frank with you, where God is now, put in the text. He hardens Pharaoh's heart.

*"A man who hardens his neck after much reproof  
Will suddenly be broken beyond remedy" (Proverbs 29:1).*

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<sup>2</sup> Hindson, E. E., & Mitchell, D. R., eds. (2010). *KJV Bible Commentary for Today: The Most Up-to-Date Commentary on the Time-Honored Text of the KJV* (p. 86).

<sup>3</sup> Charles Ryrie, *Ryrie Study Bible*, page 96.

It is like the unsaved today. They suppress a true knowledge of God in unrighteousness (Romans 1:18-20). It says three times as you move from Romans 1:18 through the end of the chapter, that God gave them over. I think a lot about this relative to our own country and the moral insanity that we are descending into with any number of things we could talk about. I sometimes wonder, "Have we gone so far in our rebellion and disobedience that God has given us over to what we want to do?" That is a terrible place to be. May God help us not to fall into that trap.

The thing about free will that is scary—and I am an advocate of free will—is that whatever decision you start to make, God will honor it because He is the one that gave you the free will to begin with. For Him to override free will choices against God would be for God to not respect how He has manufactured us. This free will, this capacity for choice, is a big deal that makes us different from anything that God has ever made. Other than maybe the angels, nothing else that God has made enjoys volition.

I thank God that I can walk across the sand with bare feet, and I feel pain in my feet because there is glass underneath the sand. Thank God for the pain, because if the pain was not there, I would not know glass was under the sand, and I would destroy my body. That is how the convicting ministry of the Spirit works. God will harass and He will bother you, but you get to a point where God says, "Okay. Go ahead. I am not going to bother you anymore. My Spirit will not strive with man forever."

This is where Pharaoh is moving. The guy completely double-crosses Moses. He did not let the people go even though he said he would. Pharaoh has done this before. I believe it was with the frogs.

*"But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and did not listen to them, as the Lord has said" (Exodus 8:15).*

He had originally said:

*"Entreat the Lord that He remove the frogs from me and from my people; and I will let the people go" (Exodus 8:8).*

That is what he says in Exodus 8:8. In Exodus 8:15, he goes back on his word.

Pharaoh, of course, is a type of the devil. That is how Satan is. He is an absolute liar; yet he comes as an angel of light. Jesus said of Satan in John 8:44:

*"He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44).*

I am here to tell you folks that this world is under his authority right now. As much as all of these theologians and ministries and pastors are proclaiming this optimistic eschatology. TBN, who I did not think could get any worse, is now running a special. It

is very well done. My wife turned it on and I watched about five minutes of it and I said, "We have to shut this off." It was so deceptive, alluring, with the best special effects, the best theologians, and the whole premise of it is to forget the End Times—we are bringing in the kingdom now. That is what they are saying. I cannot remember the name of it. It is something like, "God is With Us," or something.

Usually, I like to watch stuff just for opposition research. I could not even watch this. It was one lie after another, and it sounded so slick and it sounded so good. "The Antichrist is not future. The Antichrist is Nero." On and on this went. It ignores completely what the Bible teaches: We are living on hostile territory.

All of these verses teach you that Satan is the God of this age: the prince of this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11); the God of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4); the prince and power of the air (Ephesians 2:2); he is the one who walks about like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8); the whole world lies in his lap (1 John 5:19). The dragon deceives the whole world (Revelation 12:9).

If Satan can deceive a third of the angels who stood in the presence of God into rebelling with him against God, what could he do to you? What could he do to me in my fallen state? Now I am starting to understand the significance of our spiritual warfare and spiritual armor. I cannot fight this level of deception through my own power.

The truth of the matter is, Satan is running planet Earth. The whole creation groans we are told (Romans 8:22). Even our bodies are groaning (Romans 8:23). The world is in his grasp, and he does not want to give it up any more than Pharaoh wanted to let the Israelites go.

Pharaoh said you can go, but lied about it. That is why Pharaoh is a type of the devil and Egypt in bondage is a type of this world in bondage. It sounds depressing, but the thing about it is that ultimate victory is coming. It is not going to be executed through the church taking dominion. That is insanity. It is going to be executed through the seals, the trumpets, and the golden bowls of wrath, just like Egypt being taken out of bondage was executed by the ten plagues.

This is a parallel that John is drawing for us in the Book of Revelation. That is why so many of the events in the Book of Revelation sound like judgments in the Book of Egypt—sores is that is the sixth plague in Exodus and the first bowl judgment in Revelation; rivers to blood is the first plague in Exodus and the third bowl judgment in Revelation; darkness is the ninth plague in Exodus, which we have not studied that yet, and it correlates with the fifth bowl judgment in Revelation; frogs which we have studied, is the second plague in Exodus 6, and the sixth bowl judgment in Revelation; hail, which is coming in the seventh plague in Exodus, is the seventh bowl judgment in Revelation.

Why are all these parallels here? Because in the Book of Revelation, God is doing the ultimate exodus. He is taking the whole world out of satanic bondage, just as He, in microcosm form, took His own nation out of Pharaoh's bondage in the Book of Exodus.

God will succeed. God will succeed when it looks like success is not possible. To the complete and total arrogance of this TBN special saying that it is the church's responsibility to pull this off, I just say to myself, "I do not know what Bible you guys are reading if you read it at all." They surely sounded good teaching a bunch of error.

Ultimate victory is coming (Revelation 11:15):

*"Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever'" (Revelation 11:15).*

This is why you are a winner, because you are connected to the One who is going to pull this off. Jesus said this to His disciples in John 16:33:

*"These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).*

"I have done it all. It does not look like you are going to get victory, but you are going to get it. It is coming in spades." The only real question is, are we on the right side of God? There is only one way to get on the right side of God, and that is to trust in His provision. That is the gospel, good news. Jesus, through His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension 2,000 years ago, accomplished something that I could never accomplish in my own strength, and neither could you: complete and total victory, which lays the foundation for the ultimate victory that is to come. You can get on the right side of this by fulfilling a simple condition, which is to trust in what God did for you 2,000 years ago.

"Trust" is a synonym for "rely," or "depend upon." They are all different words for "faith."

*"And without faith it is impossible to please Him" (Hebrews 11:6).*

We would encourage anyone within the sound of my voice that wants to be a winner, to get on the right side of God who is the ultimate winner, by trusting in Jesus. It is something you can do right now in the quietness of your own mind and heart. It is not 'something that you raise a hand to do, walk an aisle to do, give money to do, emote to do, vow to try harder to do. It is just a matter of privacy between you and the Lord, where He puts you under conviction and He says, "You need this." You respond to it by trusting in what Jesus did.