

Exodus 033
Two Reactions
Exodus 9:13-21
February 8, 2026
Dr. Andy Woods

Let us take our Bibles this morning and open them to Exodus 9:13. We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through the Book of Exodus. Lord willing, we will be making it through Exodus 9:21 this morning.

The title of our message this morning is "Two Reactions." As the Lord is busy in this book redeeming His elect nation, the nation of Israel, out of the bondage that it has been in for 400 years, He has raised up His man that He is going to use and work through a man named Moses. Finally, at the ripe old age of 80, Moses is ready to get to work for the Lord.

The work that happens is amazing. There is a long waiting period in Moses' life, and then suddenly the Lord starts to move through Moses upon Egypt. Through that has come the ten plagues that we are studying, upon the land of Egypt. We are now moving into plague number seven. We have seen the Nile turned to blood; we have seen frogs, gnats, flies, and death of livestock; last week we saw boils. It is not exactly a warm, fuzzy thought for the day. Now we are going to see hail, which we never see in Texas except on rare occasions.

We are in judgment number seven: the hail (Exodus 9:13-35). We are not going to get that far today, through the end of the chapter, but there is a layout of the judgment of hail.

Hail (Exodus 9:13-35)

- I. God's Instructions (13-16)
 - A. God's Edict (13)
 - B. God's Judgment (14)
 - C. God's Purpose (15-16)
- II. God's Prediction (17-21)
 - A. The Culprit (17)
 - B. The Timing (18)
 - C. The Protection (19)
 - D. Two Reactions (20-21)
 1. Believers (20)
 2. Unbelievers (21)
- III. Prophecy's Fulfillment (22-26)
- IV. Pharaoh's Reaction (27-32)

V. Moses' Reversal (33-35)

It begins with God's instructions. God instructs Moses on what he is to say to Pharaoh concerning this judgment, judgment number seven. First of all, we have God's edict. Notice, if you will, Exodus 9:13:

"Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Rise up early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, 'Let My people go, that they may serve Me'''" (Exodus 9:13).

You will notice that God calls the special nation that He has brought into existence through the patriarch Abraham, "the Hebrews." That is a name that goes way back into the Book of Genesis. You might remember that Potiphar's wife made the accusation against Joseph, and this may be one of the first times we see the word "Hebrews" in Scripture.

"She called to the men of her household and said to them, 'See, he has brought in a Hebrew to us to make sport of us; he came in to lie with me, and I screamed'" (Genesis 39:14).

That is when Joseph is falsely accused of rape. In the process of that accusation, she calls Joseph one of "the Hebrews." Here you will notice that God calls Himself "the God of the Hebrews." God apparently is nationalistic.

As we worked our way through the Book of Genesis, we saw all the different names for God: Elohim, referring to His power; Yahweh, referring to His relational aspect; El Roi, meaning "God sees," his awareness. Every name of God bringing out a different feature of his character: El Olam, "el" is God, and "olam" is forever—He is forever God—He is the uncaused cause; Jehovah Jireh, He is the provider; He is to be revered because he is the God whom Isaac feared.

It is not until we get to Genesis 33:22 that God is referred to as "God, the God of Israel." He is a national God. He identifies with a nation, the nation of Israel. That is why, in the End Times, when all of the problems Israel faces, she is going to be just fine. In the end, God is her God.

I wish the Ayatollah would read Psalm 121:4. It says:

*"Behold, He who keeps Israel
Will neither slumber nor sleep" (Psalm 121:4).*

I do not spend a lot of my time worrying about Israel because Israel is God's nation. He is going to deal with them. I do spend some time feeling concerned about America, because America, as far as I can tell, does not have a covenant with God the way the

nation of Israel does. Israel, at the end of the day, is going to be just fine because God is the God of the Hebrews.

What does the God of the Hebrews tell Moses to tell Pharaoh? Here is what you are to tell him: *"Let My people go, that they may serve Me"* (Exodus 9:13). The first thing you are to do is tell him, "Let My people go." That becomes a microcosm of what God does in our lives as individual believers.

The first thing He wants to do is to release us from bondage. All of us in Adam's original sin are in a state of incarceration and imprisonment. Satan is so good at putting us in prison that most of us do not even realize we are in prison, but biblically speaking, we are taken captive to do his will. Jesus is in the business of setting us free.

John 8:32: "And you will know the truth, and the truth will make you miserable." No, it does not say that, does it?

"And you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (John 8:32).

Free from what? Free from the horrible consequence and price tag of sin.

"So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36).

"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Corinthians 3:17).

"It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery." (Galatians 5:1).

I do not want to go back to slavery, because God has set me free. He is doing this on a national basis, and He does this for us on an individual basis, but there is more to it than that. Why are they being set free? It is in the second part of Exodus 9:13: *"that they may serve Me."*

A lot of Christians have the attitude that God saved me and now I am set free. I have my fire insurance paid up. I am not on my way to hell. Praise the Lord for that, but they talk like that is all that God had in mind when He liberated us.

Actually, God sets us free so that we may ultimately serve Him. The first phase is called justification; the second phase is called growth or sanctification. God wants us to grow up in Him. He wants to bring us to a point where He can actually use our lives to expand His eternal purposes on the earth.

When God set me free at the age of 16, He also had in mind—Of course, I did not know at the time—the ministry that He wanted me to have. I have no corner on God. God

works in the same pattern in your life. He wants to set you free, but then He wants to use your life to set other people free. "Let them go, that they may serve Me," is what Pharaoh is to receive from Moses.

We see all of this in Ephesians 2:8-10. It says:

"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

I cannot tell you how many books I have read, studies that I have listened to, and sermons that I have heard, where everybody stops quoting the passage at the end of Ephesians 2:9. The last time I checked, Ephesians 2:10 follows Ephesians 2:9. Can I get an Amen on that one? It says:

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we might walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

I am not saved by good works, but I am saved for good works. I am saved unto good works. You will notice that "walk," "peripateo [περιπατέω]" is in the subjunctive mood [περιπατήσωμεν] there, meaning it is the mood of possibility. In other words, I have to cooperate with growth to be used by God.

Some Christians are still heaven bound, but quench the Spirit at that point and they become unusable, although they will arrive in heaven. We do not want to be that way; we want to be the type of Christian that, once we arrive in heaven, we are not in heaven, but are fully rewarded. Not only am I saved by grace, but I have grown and matured to a point where God wants to use me to expand His purposes upon the earth. Being set free, being liberated is very important, but phase two is important as well. Usability unto God.

Then He describes here to Moses what He is to say to Pharaoh, the type of judgment that is about to hit Egypt. You see that in Exodus 9:14. It says:

"For this time I will send all My plagues on you and your servants and your people, so that you may know there is no one like Me in all the earth" (Exodus 9:14).

You will notice that this judgment of hail when it comes is going to be very comprehensive. "It is going to hit your servants, Pharaoh; it is going to hit your people." If you look at the judgment of boils that we studied last time, going back to Exodus 9:9, it is going to come upon your animals; it is going to come upon your beasts.

You will see that these sores are going to come upon man and beast. You notice that when God brings judgment, He is very good at bringing it comprehensively. He is capable of bringing it upon every individual entity, whether it is an animal, whether it is a servant, whether it is people in the royal palace, whether it is people in the house, whether it is people in the field. It is comprehensive in nature.

This becomes a type, if you will, a microcosm of what is coming yet future on planet Earth where God is going to bring forth judgments similar to these. They will not be national. They will not only affect Pharaoh. They will affect the entire world. These are the seal judgments, the trumpet judgments, the golden bowl judgments that we read about in the Book of Revelation.

Why is God bringing this comprehensive judgment upon Egypt? Look at the end of Exodus 9:14: *"so that you may know that there was no one like Me in all the earth."*

God wants Pharaoh to understand that God is different. God is unique, God is special. One of the things that we have looked at (and we will say more about this a little later as we have moved through these various judgments), is that each of the judgments is designed to mock one of the Egyptian deities. I was probably as surprised to learn this as you were. As I was studying commentaries on the Book of Exodus in preparation for this series, the Egyptians probably worshiped around 80 gods—gods of course, with a little G.

| The Plagues of Egypt | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| NO. | DESCRIPTION | SCRIPTURE | Egyptian Deity |
| 1. | Water to Blood | Exod. 7:14-25 | Hapi, Khnum |
| 2. | Frogs | Exod. 8:1-15 | Heqt |
| 3. | Gnats | Exod. 8:16-19 | Set |
| 4. | Flies | Exod. 8:20-32 | Uatchit |
| 5. | Disease on Cattle | Exod. 9:1-7 | Hathor, Apis |
| 6. | Boils | Exod. 9:8-12 | Sekhmet, Serapis |
| 7. | Hail | Exod. 9:13-35 | Seth, Nut |
| 8. | Locusts | Exod. 10:1-20 | Seth, Nut, Osiris |
| 9. | Darkness | Exod. 10:21-29 | Re, Horus, Atum |
| 10. | Death of the First Born | Exod. 12:29-36 | Min, Osiris, Heqt, Isis |

They worshiped the Nile and God says, "How is that working for you? I just turned it to blood." They worshiped frogs. God says, "I will multiply so many frogs throughout Egypt that you will not know what to do with them, if you like frogs that much." In fact, one of the things the Egyptians worshiped was the firstborn. You will see that in plague number ten, where God is going to kill the firstborn all over Egypt. Why is God doing this? One of His purposes in doing this is so that Pharaoh and the Egyptians, as the word of this

redemptive event spreads through the entire world, is that everyone would know that God is different. God is unique.

I hope that is how you look at God. I hope when you look at God, you do not give Him a place on the mantel next to all the other gods, because He does not belong there. He is different. He is unique. He is higher and above any other thing that human beings could ever worship. That is what is meant by this statement here: *"so that you may know that there is no one like Me in all the earth"* (Exodus 9:14).

If you can look at Jesus and see Him just as one of many competitors, then you do not understand Jesus. You do not understand God. If you look at Jesus and see Him as completely and totally unique—the One that spoke and the heavens and earth leapt into existence; the One that, through His sacrificial death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, paid the full penalty for our sins; that He is our only Redeemer; that He is our only Creator—then you understand who Jesus is.

There is a lot of Jesus talk today in the culture. People throw this word "Jesus" around a lot. Oftentimes as profanity, sadly. The Jehovah's Witnesses talk about Jesus, the Mormons talk about Jesus, Shirley MacLaine and the New Age movement talk about Jesus. In fact, Don Lemon interrupts church services and says he is doing it to serve Jesus. That is where our culture is. Jesus is just one of the crowd. But here God says that He is different. He is unique.

Jesus is described as follows in John 1:14:

"And the Word [Jesus] became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

I used to memorize these kinds of verses, and I used to memorize this phrase, "only begotten," having no understanding what it meant. Actually, there is a very easy concept behind the translation, "only begotten." It is a translation from the Greek word "monogenes [μονογενής]." You recognize the word "mono [μονο]" as in "monopoly," alone by itself; and "genes [γενής]" meaning "species or kind." It literally means "one of a kind." Who is Jesus? He is different; He is special; He is unique; He is one of a kind.

God says, "When I do these miracles," as He speaks to Moses, to communicate to Pharaoh, "I want people to understand, and I want the Egyptians that are worshiping these 80 deities in the Egyptian pantheon to understand that I am different from all of these other gods." God wants His rightful place reclaimed, and He deserves it because He is God. He says, "A comprehensive judgment is coming to Egypt, and it will demonstrate My uniqueness."

Then you move down to Exodus 9:15-16, and you start to see the purpose in the judgment. God says this to Pharaoh through Moses:

*""For if by now I had put forth My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, you would then have been cut off from all the earth""
(Exodus 9:15).*

What Moses is to communicate to Pharaoh is that God could have taken Pharaoh out a long time ago—that would be very easy for God to do—but He has allowed Pharaoh to exist because God uses His enemies. Only God can do this to accomplish His purposes. Even prior to using Pharaoh, which He has done throughout this book, He has given Pharaoh multiple opportunities to get right with God. God says, "You will not get right with Me? You want to set yourself against Me? Then I can actually use your rebellion against Me to accomplish My will. That is the only reason, Pharaoh, that you are breathing and that you exist."

What you see here is the love of God for Pharaoh. God loves everyone.

"The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient towards you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

I say, "Lord, thank You that You did not come back before 1983, because 1983 is when I, an insecure 16 year old, put my trust in Jesus Christ. God saw what I would do, responding to His free gift. He held up the whole parade just for me. It is not just me. He held it up for you. Obviously, there are many people in this world that He is waiting for. He is being patient with them. Or else judgment would have come a long time ago.

"[God] desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4).

Now, of course, they are not saved until they place their faith in Christ, but He desires them to be saved. He waits patiently, just like He did in the days of Noah. He waited patiently. According to Genesis 6:3 says that He waited for 120 years, which is a long period of time. We are coming up on our 250th anniversary as a country this coming July 4th. Think of the age of the United States of America, half of it is roughly how long God put up with all of the insanity, violence, genetic tampering, sexual immorality, you name it, that was taking place in the days of Noah.

In fact, there is a guy in the Bible named Methuselah. Do you know what Methuselah's name means? It means "when he dies, it shall be sent." Meaning that when he dies, the Flood is going to come. Could you imagine having a kid like that living in your neighborhood? Every time he gets a bruised knee or something, everybody could get all nervous. It is interesting that the oldest living man in the whole Bible, from a human standpoint, was this man, Methuselah. He lived to the ripe old age of 969. It is not coincidental, and it is not accidental that God attached judgment to Methuselah's death, who happened to live the longest. That is the patience of God, the love of God, the mercy of God, the forbearance of God.

This is what is being revealed here concerning Pharaoh. "Pharaoh, you would not even exist, you would not even be standing, if I was not using your life." Not only does God love people and postpone judgment for people, but when people set themselves against God, He actually uses their own rebellious lives to accomplish His purposes.

We get more of a description on this in Exodus 9:16, which says:

""But indeed, for this reason I have allowed you to remain, in order to show you My power and in order to proclaim My name throughout all the earth"" (Exodus 9:16).

God uses wicked, evil human rulers to accomplish His will. When a ruler or a person of influence sets their heart against God, do not hit the panic button, because God is so big that He can actually use the rebellion of that person to execute His purposes. Pharaoh is stubborn, as we are going to see, and he will not let God's people go. God says, "Fine. I will use that. I will use that to bring forth the judgments upon Egypt, and as I do that, My glory and My name will be proclaimed throughout the earth."

God used a man named Cyrus that way. Cyrus is the man whose name is called out 200 years in advance by the prophet Isaiah. Cyrus would be the one who would allow the nation of Israel to return after the 70-year Babylonian captivity. Cyrus did not know God at all. Think of his name being referenced 200 years before it happened:

*"For the sake of Jacob My servant,
And Israel My chosen one,
I have also called you by your name;
I have given you a title of honor
Though you have not known Me" (Isaiah 45:4).*

See what the Bible teaches is that the king's heart is like water in a watercourse (Proverbs 21:1). Just as a watercourse directs water wherever the course wants, God has the heart of a wicked ruler in the palm of His hand, and He can direct it at will. These wicked rulers do not understand that. They think they exist because they are so great and wonderful, but the reality is that God is saying, "I could have wiped you out a long time ago. I am actually using your rebellion to accomplish My will."

It reminds me of the interaction between Jesus and Pilate:

"So Pilate said to Him, 'You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?'" (John 19:10).

"You are not going to talk. Do you now know who I am? Do you not understand my power? Do you not understand that your destiny is in my hands?" Pilate said to Jesus. But John 19:11 says:

"Jesus answered 'You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given to you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has the greater sin'" (John 19:11).

The nation of Israel actually had the greater sin than Pilate, because they had an Old Testament record, and they should have known who Jesus was. Pilate did not have that. But Pilate was irritated with Jesus and said, "Do you know who you are dealing with? You are not going to respond? Do you know who it is you are dealing with?" Jesus is very clear that, "Yes, I know who it is I am dealing with, but you would have no authority and no power whatsoever if it had not been given to you by My Father in heaven."

That is another way of looking at these wicked rulers. It is another way of looking at the Ayatollahs, the Putins, and all of these wicked rulers that think they are so big and so strong. The truth of the matter is that they would not exist without judgment if God had not allowed it. He is actually using their lives to accomplish His purposes.

We see in this a type of Satan: Pharaoh being a type of the devil. Satan only exists because God allows it.

Ezekiel 28:15 says of Satan:

*"You were blameless in your ways
From the day you were created
Until unrighteousness was found in you" (Ezekiel 28:15).*

The devil himself is God's devil, and God just keeps Satan around to accomplish God's purposes. Then we spend all of eternity marveling at God that God can use His enemies to accomplish His will. Once God is finished with Satan, He will be consigned where He belongs—into the lake of fire.

Satan and the demonic realm themselves understand that they are on the losing side of history. This is why when Jesus came in His first coming when He would encounter demons, the demons would say to Him through possessed people, "Have You come to torture us before the appointed time?" They knew this time of judgment was coming. They just did not know when. They did not want it to come, but they knew it was coming. That is how to look at evil, wickedness, and wicked people in our world.

It is so easy to binge feed on the latest news cycle without seeing these things through the prism and the paradigm of God. When you start to look at it from this angle, you actually start to feel sorry for these wicked people because judgment is coming and they have no idea that it is on the horizon.

This is what Moses is to communicate to Pharaoh in Exodus 9:16: "I am actually going to use Pharaoh to accomplish My will. As that happens, My name—not your name,

Moses; not Aaron's name—is going to be proclaimed throughout the entire earth, as the earth and the inhabitants of the earth contemplate and ruminates upon these judgments."

One of the things to understand about God is that His purposes in history are doxological. "Doxa" means "glory." His primary purpose in history is to glorify Himself, which He has the right to do as God. His primary purpose in history is not even to save people.

Now, do not get me wrong, salvation is a big deal, but even when someone gets saved, that is not the ultimate purpose of God. When someone is saved, Luke 15 tells us that the angels rejoice. Presumably God is glorified. Even the plan of salvation itself is not the end game; it is not the quintessential motive; it is God glorifying Himself. His purposes in history are not soteriological, primarily, but doxological. Even my salvation glorified God. Even our usability and usefulness unto God glorifies God. It all needs to be subsumed under the category of the doxological purposes of God.

That is how to evaluate activities and behavior in the church. There are a lot of things this church could do, and there are some things this church does not do. Why do we make a decision about whether we go this direction or that direction? The answer to that question is: Does it glorify God?

Not everything in the Bible tells you exactly how to do this or that. Should you start a Wednesday night Bible study? Should you start teaching at 7:00 and end at 8:00? Should we do a Q&A session after it? How do we structure communion? Should we put communion before the sermon or after the sermon? How do we do that? What time should we let people out on Super Bowl Sunday? And all of these kinds of questions.

There is not a manual that says, "Thus saith the Lord, 'Let them out at 12:30 on Super Bowl Sunday.'" The issue is: Does it glorify God? That is how you make any decision within the church. Ephesians three verse 21 says that God seeks glory in the church. Does this glorify God? That is how you make decisions in your own life. Do I work here or work there? Do I marry this person or marry that person? Do I live in this town or that town? There is no rule book in the Bible telling you exactly what to do. You are in the mindset of what is going to bring the greatest glory to God, and then you start making decisions along those lines.

As you do that, you start to discover the purpose for which you were born, which is to glorify God. Should I attend this church or that church? Should I be involved in this ministry or that ministry? You just keep asking yourself: Which glorifies God? "Lord, I am here, I am available. I want to be usable. I want You to glorify Yourself through me and help me with these decisions." You would not believe how life will start making sense when we start to have that mindset and that mentality.

Those are the instructions that Pharaoh is to receive from Moses. Then in the process, God gives a prediction (Exodus 9:17-21). First the culprit. Notice Exodus 9:17, spoken to Pharaoh by Moses:

*""Still you exalt yourself against My people by not letting them go""
(Exodus 9:17).*

That is what sin is, is it not? You exalt yourself. My holy trinity starts to consist of me, myself, and I. I am promoting myself instead of the Lord. I am promoting my own way of thinking instead of the Lord's thinking. I am promoting my own way of doing things instead of the Lord's way of doing things.

"I know the Bible teaches you no abstinence before marriage, either as a young person or as an older person, for that matter. But you know what? The world says something different. I think I need to check under the hood before I buy the car. After all, I took sex ed at the public school system, and they told me it is okay." But the Bible says something different. "Yes, but I am going to set that aside for now."

What have you just done? You have taken your own standard and our own way of doing things, and you have elevated that ahead of God. That is what sin is, and this is what Pharaoh was doing. He was exalting himself "against My people by not letting My people go" (Exodus 9:17).

This is the whole problem with Satan's fall. In Isaiah 14:12-15, Satan had a bad case of the "I's". He makes five statements here:

*""I will ascend to heaven;
I will raise my throne above the stars of God—"" (Isaiah 14:13).*

"The stars of God" is a reference to the angels. "I do not want to run the angelic system on God's behalf; I am going to run it myself for my glory."

""And I will sit on the mount of assembly—"" (Isaiah 14:13).

Which is the holy mountain of Jerusalem, Mount Zion, where Jesus will rule from one day (Isaiah 2:2-3). "I will sit there."

""I will ascend above the tops of the clouds—"" (Isaiah 14:14).

"The tops of the clouds" in Scripture refers to God's glory when it says in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 that Jesus in the Rapture is coming in the clouds. I used to think, "Lord, I do not see any clouds today. I guess You are not coming today." Then I started to understand that it is not the weather we are dealing with here. "I am coming in My glory in the Rapture." But Satan says, "I want to be above the tops of the clouds."

Then he says something that has gotten more people into more problems than any other lie I can think of. This is what got the whole human race into problems going back to the Fall in Eden. This is what was in Satan's head in his rebellion. He says:

""I will make myself like the Most High"" (Isaiah 14:14).

The Bible is very clear that first comes pride and then comes condemnation; then comes a fall (Proverbs 16:18). Paul says, "Do not put a novice into a position of leadership in the church, lest he fall into the condemnation of Satan (1 Timothy 3:6). That is what will do to a person that will elevate themselves and their way of doing things over the glory of God. Baby Christians are prone to do that because they have not learned the walk of discipleship. The last thing you would ever do, Paul says, as he is writing to Timothy, is to place a new believer into a position of authority within the church because they will promote themselves over God, and then they will be in a lot of trouble; they will fall into the condemnation of Satan.

Billy Graham said, "You want longevity in ministry? Here are three things you do not touch (these all begin with the letter G): Number one, do not touch the gold (embezzlement, financial scandal); number two, do not touch the girls (sexual immorality); then the third thing he said is, do not touch the glory—do not promote yourself or position yourself, or elevate yourself over the mind and the ways of God. You watch people fall (which happens sadly, frequently in ministry), and it is always those three things.

Satan does not need to be all that creative with us. We fall for the same stuff over and over again. I read about people that fall in ministry and I say, "What was it? Girls, gold, or glory?" That one was girls; that one was gold; that one over there that was glory, or some combination thereof.

You have a tremendous definition of what sin is, and it is more of a spirit here. It talks in these passages about Satan being Lucifer as a high ranking angel. He was very beautiful, by the way. The Ezekiel 28 passage that I referenced earlier, with the jasper, the beryl, the diamond, the emerald, and the gold, gives you the impression that as he was held up to the light of the glory of God—and God is light, and He is clothed in unapproachable light (1 Timothy 6:16)—he radiated beauty. He made sense in that role, but he got discontent with the role. He wanted to replace God. The purpose for which he was created disappeared and he became Satan, the adversary.

The name Lucifer actually means "light bearer." The Bible tells us that Satan comes as an angel of light. This is why. Do not look at Satan as pitchfork, red cape, and horns; that comes out of the Middle Ages, not the Bible. He comes as an angel of light. The problem with Lucifer the light bearer is just too many I's. Five times he says, "I will."

This is what Pharaoh is doing. He has a bad case of the I's. But you know what? God is using it, because as Pharaoh does this, God gets the opportunity to showcase who He

is by way of judgments. God is going to use this to glorify His name, not only in Egypt, not only in Israel, but the Bible is very clear that His name is going to be glorified throughout the whole earth. The doxological purpose of God, how He can actually use rebellion in the lives and the minds of His free-will creatures to accomplish His purposes. Let me assure you of this: we are going to spend all of eternity amazed at this, as we contemplate and ruminate the working of God.

Then there is some timing given in Exodus 9:18. Pharaoh is to learn this through Moses:

*""Behold, about this time tomorrow, I will send you a very heavy hail, such as has not been seen in Egypt from the day it was founded until now""
(Exodus 9:18).*

This is going to be supernatural. It is impossible to look at these miracles and say they are naturalistic. The History Channel says they are naturalistic, but we do not go by the History Channel. The History Channel says, "Bloods. That was a special time of the year where that happened. Then the frogs jumped out because they did not like the new climate." They come up with naturalistic explanations for the plagues.

When you look at these biblically, this is supernatural. These are things that only God can do: Moses knew beforehand what was going to happen with these plagues; the plagues start on time and stop on time; they are described as signs and wonders; they intensify as Pharaoh's heart hardens; their timed to precision; and they accomplish a moral purpose. They were so profound that the Egyptian sorcerers tried to imitate them. Then finally, the sorcerers said, "Only God can do this." The last seven plagues did not even affect the Jews living in Goshen. When the Nile turned to blood, it affected water out of the Nile in the vessels. Who can do that other than God?

As I said before, each plague is designed to mock one of the Egyptian deities in the polytheistic pantheon. Ed Hindson says:

"The Egyptian deities challenged by the seventh plague would have been Shu and Nut, I guess, the respective sky god and goddess; Set and Isis, the respective God and goddess charged with providing weather conditions conducive to agriculture; and Osiris, the god charged with crop production."¹

There are four or five gods and goddesses here, and God in this plague is taking out five of them because He wants the worship. This is why there are so many statements in the Scripture about condemnation of idolatry. An idol is something that we worship instead of God. It could be anything: something that gives you power, something that gives you satisfaction. It could be a relationship, it could be money, it could be health, it

¹ 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. 95).

could be a talent. These are things that are not wrong on the surface, but they very quickly move into a place of preeminence in our hearts.

God says, "I am not having that." He will start to put pressure on your life (I know this because He has done this to me multiple times), so that we will relinquish that god and restore God to His rightful place.

We are so prone to idolatry. First John 5:21, at the end of his little epistle, John says:

"Little children, guard yourself from idols" (1 John 5:21).

Of course, you know Matthew 6:24: *"No one can serve two masters."* In other words, God is a lousy roommate. God does not want to be a roommate with somebody; He wants to take over.

"No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and wealth" (Matthew 6:24).

Not that wealth is a problem in and of itself. The problem is when our possessions own us rather than us owning our possessions. Now it is a problem. The problem is when I am looking to things of a material nature for my fulfillment and my future, and I am not looking to God. Now we have a problem, and God will start to work in our lives so that those idols are unearthed.

*"I am the Lord, that is My name;
I will not give My glory to another,
Nor My praise to graven images" (Isaiah 42:8).*

Look at how this judgment of hail is described here in Exodus 9:18. When it hits, it will be *"such as has not been in Egypt from the day it was founded until now."* How long has Egypt been around for? Egypt goes back to forever, almost. If you go to Egypt today (and I have been there), they can point to tombs and leaders going way back in history. Egypt was functioning in the time of Abraham 600 years before this. It is highly likely that Abraham saw today what we refer to as the Egyptian pyramids. God says, "When I bring this judgment, it is going to be different from anything Egypt has ever faced. It will be completely and totally unique."

That is a description of the Tribulation Period as well. The Bible says when that period comes, it will be unlike anything this world has ever faced. In Matthew 24:21, as Jesus is describing that time period, He says:

"For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will" (Matthew 24:21).

*"Alas! for that day is great,
There is none like it;
And it is the time of Jacob's distress,
But he will be saved from it" (Jeremiah 30:7).*

Aren't you glad it is not a time of the church's distress, but Jacob's distress? You are not Jacob. We are not here during this time period.

*"I will make mortal man scarcer than pure gold
And mankind than the gold of Ophir" (Isaiah 13:12).*

*"And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there
was a nation until that time" (Daniel 12:1).*

*"There has never been anything like it,
Nor will there be again after it
To the years of many generations" (Joel 2:2).*

I always loved listening to Charles Ryrie teach. He taught at a little Bible church a few doors from my house when I was living in the Dallas area, and I loved going to that little church and hearing him. One time in this little class, very small, he held up four fingers. He said, "Everybody look up here. That is Revelation 6, and that is Revelation 9. Revelation 6 describes the destruction of a quarter of the world's population, and Revelation 9 describes the destruction of a third of the Earth's population," leaving two of four fingers left on his hand. He said, "That is what half of the Tribulation Period is going to be like." It was one of the greatest theological lessons I ever saw; just an easy-to-understand illustration.

This is what the Scripture is talking about. What happened to Egypt was very unique, but what is coming on this world is going to be even more unique. You will also notice that there is a prophecy of protection. Whenever you see judgment in the Bible, keep reading because you will see God's mercy. Whenever you see God's mercy in the Bible, keep reading because you will see God's judgment. They are always together. God tempers judgment with mercy. These are both features of the character of God. He is a God of love, and yet He is a God of holiness. You cannot have God with one and without the other. If your view of God is only holiness and not love, you do not understand God. If your view of God is love and no holiness, you do not understand God. He is both.

When we take one attribute of God and magnify it and shrink another attribute of God, we have just made an idol. We have misrepresented God, and God is against idolatry. This is why Jesus says to the woman at the well, that we are to worship God in Spirit and truth (John 4:24). We are to worship God as He is, not as I want Him to be, or as I would like Him to be, or what makes me comfortable, but what He is. Do not get me wrong, He is loving, but do not get me wrong, He is also holy—He is both.

In the midst of this judgment talk, as you would think, there would come a word of grace. There is a way out. You see that there in Exodus 9:19:

""Now therefore send, bring your livestock and whatever you have in the field to safety. Every man and beast that is found in the field and is not brought home, when the hail comes down on them, will die"" (Exodus 9:19).

There is a way out. The hail is coming. It is going to kill people. It is going to kill animals. Here is the way out: get under protective covering. There is a way of escape, like the Tribulation Period. It is a terrible time that is coming, but you know what? There is a way out. The way out is trusting in Christ.

I am a path of least resistance guy. I do not want to be plunged into this time period. Since it is coming and the Bible does not give me options in terms of maybe it is going to come or maybe it is not. Since it is coming, why not take the escape route? "Andy, you sound like an escapist." You know what? I plead guilty to that. I am the biggest escapist you will ever find on planet Earth. I will take the escape if an escape is possible.

Is not all of Christianity an escape? Christianity is an escape from hell. I do not have to go; I do not have to be there. I do not even have to be here during this time of judgment. What I am experiencing now is the worst that could happen to me. What a message of hope and optimism that is.

The judgment is coming. Here is the way out: get under protective covering. What is God's message to humanity today? It is the same message. Judgment is coming, but get under protective covering. What is protective covering? The cross. Because at the cross, Jesus stepped into the line of fire and absorbed in my place the wrath of God that should be on me. It should be me nailed to that cross, given the holiness of God, but Jesus took the penalty for me. A fancy word term in theology that we have for this is vicarious (in the place of somebody else), penal (punishment), substitutionary (in the place of somebody else) atonement. Do not take any words out of that, because if you take one word out, you will misunderstand the doctrine of vicarious penal substitutionary atonement of Christ.

I thought Jesus came into the world to give us Jesus CEO leadership principles. I saw a book like that—Jesus CEO. Jesus is a CEO; He will teach you how to run your business. You are going to learn great financial truths and management truths in the Bible. You will probably learn more about management than any other book, but if you think that is the purpose that Jesus came, that that is the end game, what a shrinking of who Jesus is.

Why did He come? Vicarious penal substitutionary atonement. He went into the line of fire like a Clint Eastwood movie (pardon my trivialization of it). That is what I think of: He

absorbed the bullet in the place of who the bullet was intended for. If you get anything askew there, you shrink who Jesus is. He died in my place. There is your protective covering.

As we titled this sermon, there are two reactions. You would think the whole world would embrace this. You would think everyone in Egypt would embrace this, having seen the first six plagues, but they do not. Some do, some do not. The believers did (Exodus 9:20):

"The one among the servants of Pharaoh who feared the word of the Lord made his servants and his livestock flee into the houses" (Exodus 9:20).

Who were the ones that took the cue, took the exhortation, and went into protective covering? It is very clear here: they were the ones that feared the Lord. What does that even mean, "Fear of the Lord"? It means to respect the word of the Lord.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Proverbs 1:7).

A person gets smart when they respect God's Word. The problem with the unsaved world is that they do not fear God.

"There is no fear of God before their eyes" (Romans 3:18).

It is not that their behavior is the number one issue. They behave the way they behave because they do not have any respect for God. We do not want to be that way.

"By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to the according to faith" (Hebrews 11:7).

Why would Noah, for 120 years, build this giant construction in his driveway or wherever it was, when the world at that time did not even know what rain was? Genesis 2 talks about mist rising from the ground and watering the garden (Genesis 2:6), if I am understanding my Bible correctly. He was building this giant ark. He was a preacher of righteousness (2 Peter 2:5). He worked on this for 120 years. According to the Creation scientist Henry Morris, there were at least seven billion people on planet Earth. Why would you do something like that and just be ridiculed for 120 years, warning of a flood and building this thing when they did not even know what rain was?

Why would you do that? Because he feared God. He was more respectful of what God said than what everybody thought. That is why the people that are wise and get out of harm's way are people that respect, fear, God. Look at the unbelievers. They do the exact opposite:

"But he who paid no regard to the word of the Lord left his servants and his livestock in the field" (Exodus 9:21).

In other words, they are sitting ducks. Why would you leave your livestock and those you love and your possessions and everything God says He is going to destroy with hail? Why would you leave them in the field? Because you really do not respect the word of God coming from Moses.

You have to respect the word of God to get saved.

"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17).

There are a lot of people in this world that do not have any real respect for this book. So why listen to it? They find themselves in an unsaved condition. May God help us to respect what God says and to prioritize this book accordingly and escape the wrath that is coming by taking protective cover through the cross.

It is not a bad segue into the gospel. Jesus Christ, 2,000 years ago, as we have said, absorbed the wrath of a holy God in our place. He says, "Believe or trust in what I have done. Do not work out your own salvation thinking that your own efforts can fix this problem. I fixed it for you 2,000 years ago. Now receive what I have done as a gift." That is your protective covering.

I hope many people within the sound of my voice will be placing their personal trust in Christ so as to be saved. Receive His protective covering, and escape the judgment to come. May the Lord help us to understand this, and have enough respect for the Bible to do what He tells us to do.