

Exodus 038  
Life and Death  
Exodus 10:16-20  
April 12, 2026  
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Let us take our Bibles this morning and open them up to Exodus 10:16-20. The title of our message this morning is "Life and Death." God, of course, in the book of Exodus is in the process of redeeming His elect nation, the nation of Israel, which had been in bondage to Egypt for 400 years. The instrument that God is using is Moses.

What God is now working through Moses are the ten plagues. We have covered seven of them, eight after today. We will have finished locusts after today, Lord willing. We have seen the Nile turned to blood; we have seen frogs, gnats, flies, the death of livestock, boils, and hail.

We are in the process of studying the locust judgment. It is an interesting judgment in the sense that there are a lot of conversations going on here. God gives instructions to Moses and Aaron concerning what they are to do and how they are to bring this judgment on Egypt. Moses and Aaron speak to Pharaoh. Moses and Aaron speak to Pharaoh again. Then the plague manifested (Exodus 10:12-15).

Now Pharaoh speaks to Moses and Aaron a third time. As Moses is now speaking to Pharaoh a third time, along with Aaron, you see a summoning, a repentance, and a request:

- Locusts (Exodus 10:1-20)
  - I. God's Instructions (1-2)
  - II. Moses and Aaron Speak to Pharaoh (3-6)
  - III. Moses and Aaron Speak to Pharaoh Again (7-11)
  - IV. Plague's Manifestation (12-15)
  - V. Pharaoh Speaks to Moses and Aaron (16-17)
    - A. Summoning (16a)
    - B. Repentance (16b)
    - C. Requisition (17)
  - VI. God Answers (18-20)
    - A. Exit (18a)
    - B. Supplication (18b)
    - C. God's answer (19)
    - D. God's hardening (20)

Notice the summoning:

*"Then Pharaoh hurriedly called for Moses and Aaron" (Exodus 10:16).*

Why is Pharaoh all of a sudden in a hurry? He was not in a hurry before when he talked to them the first time in Exodus 10:3, not much of a hurry. When he talked to them again beginning in Exodus 10:8, he was not in much of a hurry. But now he is in a hurry because he is in trouble. The plague has come.

We see a description of it (Exodus 10:14-15). Pharaoh wants a way out, and he acts like he is repentant, but he is not. This is very good theology right here, by the way. He gets an A plus for theology, but an F for sincerity. Even Satan has a good theology. Satan can rattle off all kinds of theological truths.

*"Then Pharaoh hurriedly called for Moses and Aaron, and he said, 'I have sinned against the Lord your God and against you'" (Exodus 10:16).*

We only wish he were sincere in that, but he is not. We will be getting to Exodus 10:20, which will end this paragraph and this judgment, where he will not let God's people go. There are a lot of people like this in the world. They say the right things. They feign some sort of contrition, but their hearts are not right with God.

It reminds me of God speaking through the prophet Isaiah, where God says:

*"Because this people draw near with their words  
And honor Me with their lip service,  
But they remove their hearts far from Me" (Isaiah 29:13).*

Jesus is not looking for an outward sign from people, an outward conformity. He is looking at the condition of the heart. He is always looking at the hearts of people. When God called David, back in 2 Samuel 16:7, God told the prophet at the time, Samuel, concerning the selection of David, "Do not look at his exterior, look at his heart. You cannot even see the heart, but the Lord can see it."

In 1 Samuel 16:7, we read these very important words:

*"But the Lord said to Samuel, 'Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God does not see as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart'" (1 Samuel 16:7).*

There were a lot of people in the ministry of Christ that superficially attached themselves to Jesus, but Jesus would not entrust Himself to them. This is what we read in John 2:23-25:

*"Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, observing His signs which He was doing. But Jesus,*

*on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men, and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man" (John 2:23-25).*

If you followed some of our teaching on that passage, we try to make the argument that those people were probably saved. They trusted in Christ alone for salvation, but they were not ready for discipleship. They were not ready for intimacy with God. They were not ready for friendship with God. We have spent other sermons developing that viewpoint and that position.

My only point here in bringing this up is showing us that Jesus sees the heart. He sees what is inside of people. How does the saying go? You can fool some of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time. The truth of the matter is that you cannot fool God. This is why, when Jesus is described in Revelation 1, His eyes of fire are depicted. He looks right into a person. He looks right into a person's heart. He looks right into a person's soul, and He can ascertain what is happening inside of people.

Pharaoh had all the right things to say. He had all the right doctrine to say. He passed the theology test. But the truth of the matter is, he had no intention whatsoever of releasing God's people from Egyptian bondage. Pharaoh probably thought he was pulling one over on God, but you cannot fool God.

We see repentance here, but it is feigned. It is not real. This leads to Pharaoh's request. You see that there in Exodus 10:17 as he is speaking to Moses and Aaron:

*"Now therefore, please forgive my sin only this once, and make supplication to the Lord your God, that He would only remove this death from me" (Exodus 10:17).*

The problem with Pharaoh is that he was upset that he was experiencing the consequences of sin. A lot of people demonstrate remorse because they got caught. They are not really sorry about the sin; they are sorry about the repercussions or consequences of the sin that they are now suffering.

Proverbs 13:15 tells us that there are consequences for sin:

*"But the way of the treacherous is hard" (Proverbs 13:15).*

We look at Scripture—the rule book of God, the blueprint of God, the plans of God—as some kind of onerous burden that He puts on us. Yet Jesus said in John 10:10: *"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."* The Ten Commandments are not restrictions. They are guard barriers that protect us from all kinds of consequences that we experience when we transgress the barriers and the borders of God.

Deuteronomy 10:13, concerning the law of God, says:

*"and to keep the Lord's commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good?" (Deuteronomy 10:13).*

The Ten Commandments of God, the rules of God, the norms of God, the principles of God, are not your enemy. They are there as a guard rail. They protect you. They protect us by design from all kinds of dangers that we would experience.

When we traverse those boundaries, it is like if you are at Pikes Peak and a child gets out of a car and starts to run for the edge, not understanding that in some cases there is no guardrail. You yell at the child not because you are mean to the child, but because you are trying to keep the child back from disaster. That is how the Ten Commandments operate in our life. That is how they function.

Pharaoh had gone too far. He had traversed the will of God, and now he was experiencing consequences. The consequences were what caused this feigned repentance. He was not glad for the rules of God or the norms of God. He was just upset that he was experiencing consequences for his own decisions.

*"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap" (Galatians 6:7).*

Why does it say that God is not mocked? It is saying that God has established a principle of life. It is an agrarian principle; it is a farming principle. You put an apple seed into the ground and you are going to get an apple tree. Put a lemon seed in the ground and you will get a lemon tree. Put poison ivy into the ground and you are going to get poison ivy back.

If God were to allow a person to put something into the ground but not experience the fruit in kind, He would be rejecting His own principle and mocking Himself.

*"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary" (Galatians 6:7-9).*

Keep sowing that good seed. Stay away from the bad seed, because in time this principle of God will be honored and you will reap a harvest in your life. Stay away from the bad seed because the bad seed is going to come up with a bad crop, bad fruit, bad tree. You will be sorry because you will experience all sorts of consequences.

That is what Pharaoh is experiencing here. It is the fruit of his own choices, and what he wants an escape from is the consequences he has produced via this plague of locusts. It says in Exodus 10:17:

*"Now therefore, please forgive my sin only this once, and make supplication to the Lord your God—" (Exodus 10:17).*

Notice it is not the 'Lord my God,' but he says it is 'your God.' He does not have a right relationship with the Lord.

*"—and make supplication to the Lord your God, that He would only remove this death from me" (Exodus 10:17).*

What does he mean by death? The plague of locusts, because it consumed all of the crop all over Egypt, was causing a famine. Because of that famine, death was transpiring. There is a clear principle in the Word of God that when we reject God's way, when we reject God's will, when we reject God's norms, and when we reject God's law, death follows in all kinds of different forms.

*"All these who hate me love death" (Proverbs 8:36).*

I find that to be a very interesting proverb, because it is a description of people who reject the Scripture, reject Jesus, reject the things of God. Isn't it interesting that such people seem to be in love with death? There is not a 'right to die' cause that they do not jump on board with. There is not a right to an abortion cause that they do not jump on board with. It is almost a characteristic of unsaved people that they love death.

*"There is a way which seems right to a man,  
But its end is the way of death" (Proverbs 14:12).*

In other words, it looks right, but the end thereof is a bad crop coming from bad seed. Our forebears were told this very clearly in Eden, were they not?

*"The Lord God commanded the man, saying, 'From any tree of the garden you may eat freely, but from the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die'" (Genesis 2:16-17).*

Was that not an accurate fulfillment prophetically of what happened?

*"For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:21-22).*

*"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—" (Romans 5:12).*

Romans 6:23 is no doubt very familiar to all of us:

*"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23).*

Notice the word 'wages.' What is a wage? It is a price; it is a cost. Sin has a cost. It leads to destruction. It leads to death. It leads to all kinds of temporal consequences that we bring on ourselves because we despise the way of the Lord.

Ephesians 2:1 says that this was our state before we got saved.

*"And you were dead in your trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1).*

How important this is to understand as a young person, with your whole life in front of you and all kinds of glittering and dazzling options and opportunities for you to choose from. Choose wisely, the Bible says, because if you go down the wrong path, then bad seed goes into the ground and a negative crop comes up.

Sometimes you do not experience the negative crop right away. You say, "I sinned and there are no consequences. After all, I watch it on TV. I see people sin all of the time. There are no consequences." James Bond never gets a venereal disease. Have you noticed that there are no unwanted pregnancies or anything from a James Bond situation? It is just you sin with impunity, sexual license, and nothing wrong transpires. So we have a generation of people that think they can just rebel against the things of God and never experience any consequences.

The Bible is very clear that there is a choice here. You choose the wrong door and it brings forth death. This is what was spoken to the children of Israel through Moses:

*"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants" (Deuteronomy 30:19).*

You have a choice here. Choose the right path. Choose the ways of God and enjoy a positive harvest rather than a negative one.

Satan is so good at marketing sin as freedom and liberation, and he does not tell people on the front end that it ends in death.

*"But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust" (James 1:14).*

Notice that I cannot blame my sin on somebody else. I cannot blame my parents. I cannot blame my friends. I made a conscious decision to sin. I followed my own lust, which is a desire of the sin nature to rebel against the principles of God.

*"Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death" (James 1:15).*

This is what Pharaoh was upset about. "I went down the wrong path. I did the wrong thing. I rebelled against God. This plague of locusts has been unleashed on Egypt. It is a plague like we have never seen before in Egypt over her very long history (Exodus 10:14-15). It is destroying the crops. Because we do not have food, death has been brought forth, and I want out of this consequence."

It is an insincere prayer request, but God in His grace answers—because at the end of the day, God is a God of grace, of unmerited favor. Grace is a beautiful word. It is the Greek word 'charis' (χάρις), which means 'favor' that comes to us which we do not deserve and certainly did not earn.

Pharaoh's request is this: "Moses and Aaron, make a supplication for me." As you look there at Exodus 10:17, you will see the word 'supplication.' What is a supplication? What is a prayer of supplication? Paul talks about prayers of supplication in Philippians 4:6-7.

*"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7).*

I cannot tell you how many times those two verses have allowed me to sleep soundly at night, when my mind was whirling because of anxiety and worry, which would have kept me up, if not half the night, all night. I simply say to myself by memory, Philippians 4:6-7, and I do what it says I should do, which is to bring to the Lord a prayer of supplication.

From the word 'supplication' we get the word 'supply.' "Lord, I am asking You to supply my need." When I entrust that need to the Lord, what happens? It is a reciprocal promise. The world cannot figure this one out. That is why they are constantly taking substances into their bodies or into their minds. The unbelievers do not have the peace of God.

*"And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7).*

I cannot tell you how many nights could have been sleepless, turned into very restful nights, because I simply repeated in my mind those two verses and I said, "Lord, here is

my need. You take over. You supply the need, whatever the need at the time might be." I am here to tell you as evidence of this, that this promise that *"the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus,"* is a real promise. It is a reciprocal promise that is rooted in this concept of supplication or supply.

I am not sure how much of this Pharaoh knew, but he knew the source of the destruction that was happening in Egypt. He says to Moses and Aaron, "Make a prayer of supplication for me. Supply my need." What is interesting about all of this (Exodus 10:18-20) is that God answers. Do you believe that God answers prayer?

Moses and Aaron leave the presence of Pharaoh now for the last time with this particular judgment. There is an exit. You see that there in Exodus 10:18:

*"He went out from Pharaoh and made supplication to the Lord" (Exodus 10:18).*

He exited just like in the prior conversations. This is now the third conversation. He exited the first time in Exodus 10:6. The second conversation with Pharaoh he exited in Exodus 10:11.

Moses gets out from the presence of Pharaoh, he gets into the presence of the Lord, and he offers this prayer of supplication. He asks God to supply the need, and to stop the plague so that this destruction to the crop will stop and the famine will stop and the death will stop.

Do not feel bad as a Christian about praying for your needs. Jesus actually taught us to pray that way, in the so-called Lord's Prayer, which is really not the Lord's Prayer, it is the disciples' prayer. He was teaching them how to pray. It is an amazing prayer. Part of it is:

*""Give us this day our daily bread"" (Matthew 6:11).*

Ask God to supply a need in your life if there is a lack. You should not feel bad about doing that, you should not feel guilty about doing that. There are all kinds of lacks or deficits that we have—financially, or perhaps health wise. There is no shame in asking God to supply a need. After all, that is how Jesus taught us to pray.

What you are going to see there in Exodus 10:19, in just a moment, is an amazing answer to prayer. Prayer is far more powerful than most of us give credence to. The Book of James talks about Elijah and what his prayer life accomplished.

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

You see, the arm of the flesh is only going to take you so far through human energy. If you really want to see things change in your life, then become a person of prayer, because then it is not your arm anymore. It is God's arm. God has a much longer reach than you or I have.

Then James gives an example:

*"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).*

It is interesting how his prayer life could even alter meteorology.

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

If you have a prayer request that is aligned with the will of God, it is almost like there is no stopping it. Sometimes our prayers do not get any higher than the ceiling because we are asking, as the Book of James tells us that ask amiss (James 4:3); we ask for selfish desires. God has no interest in answering those kinds of prayers.

The better I understand His will as revealed in His Word—and you cannot know the will of God without the Word of God, so prayer and the Word of God go together—the better I know how to focus my specific petitions. As that happens, my prayers take on greater strength, greater power, greater effectiveness.

Jesus, of course, told a parable about this in Luke 18:

*"Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart" (Luke 18:1).*

I think the King James translates it this way: "Men ought to pray always and to not grow faint." It is so easy under life's circumstances to become despondent, or discouraged when circumstances are bigger than us. What do you do in your life when you have circumstances bigger than you? You go to prayer. You pray to the Lord. You communicate to the Lord. As you pray that prayer of supplication asking God to supply a need, Paul promises that *"the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 4:7).

We begin to experience the peace of God, which transcends all understanding. You might be wondering, "Does God really listen?" Jesus went on there in Luke 18, He started to talk about a parable, a story of a person that was a widow, a woman that was not given justice. She kept crying out to this judge for justice. He was really tired of listening to her. Luke 18 tells us that he was a judge that did not love God, or did not

love man. But because she petitioned him so frequently, he relinquished to her request for justice.

The point is not to compare this judge to God; it is to show that if persistence pays off with somebody that does not love God and does not love man, then how much more will your Father in heaven listen to the prayer requests of His people as they persist?

I found many times in my life that I pray for something that I do not get right away. There is a season of delay, and the reason there is a season of delay is because God is trying to teach me something. He is trying to teach me how to persevere in prayer, to persist in prayer. Do not give up so fast. Do not give up so quickly.

*"Delight yourself in the Lord;  
And He will give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37:4).*

It could be any desire—the desire to meet a spouse, the desire to be in the right career, healing of the body, restoration of a relationship. If God has put that desire in your heart and you do not get the desire met instantaneously, then continue on in prayer. Persevere as Jesus taught us in Matthew 7:7-11. He says, "Keep on seeking, keep on asking, keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you." That is the way it reads in the original language.

What is being described here is that Moses could move the hand of God. He could stop a locust judgment from destroying everything in Egypt and causing more and more famine and more and more death, because he went to the Lord in prayer. It is interesting that Pharaoh himself seems to recognize this and Moses' relationship with God. To put it in modern vernacular, he says, "Put in a good word for me with the man upstairs. Can you do that?"

It is interesting that Pharaoh saw in Moses a relationship with God, and he knew where the source of power was in Moses' life. It is exactly the same way in your life. There is a reason why people come to you when things in their own life are not working out—unsaved friends or family members that you might have, unsaved coworkers.

It is all fun and games, smiles and laughs, but it is completely different when the bottom of their life drops out. When the layoff notice comes or the doctor's report, and those kinds of life emergencies, it is very interesting how they will go to you to ask for prayer, because they know that you know Jesus. "Put in a word for me because I know where your source of power comes from."

We need to be in that place of availability, where people can see God working through our lives. When people come to you and say, "Please pray for me about such and such," what an honor that is. They obviously have a great deal of respect for you, and more important than respect for you is respect for the God that has a relationship with you.

This is what Pharaoh asks Moses to do, and God answers (Exodus 10:19):

*"So the Lord shifted the wind to a very strong west wind which took up the locusts and drove them into the Red Sea; not one locust was left in all the territory of Egypt" (Exodus 10:19).*

If you go back to Exodus 10:13, the east wind blew the locusts into Egypt:

*"So Moses stretched out his staff over the land of Egypt, and the Lord directed an east wind on the land all that day and all that night; and when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts" (Exodus 10:13).*

The east wind brought them in, but Moses prayed, and the west wind brought them out. Amazing.

Did you know that God uses different instruments to accomplish His will? I guess God could have put out His massive hand (assuming that God has hands), and just grabbed all of the locusts in one place, but He did not do that. He used a wind to push them in, and He used a wind to push them out.

The Book of Jonah talks about this all the time.

*"When the sun came up God appointed a scorching east wind, and the sun beat down on Jonah's head so that he became faint and begged with all his soul to die, saying, 'Death is better to me than life'" (Jonah 4:8).*

What brought Jonah to that point? God appointed an east wind.

*"The Lord hurled a great wind on the sea and there was a great storm on the sea, so that the ship was about to break up" (Jonah 1:4).*

Jonah thought he could outrun God. How do you outrun somebody that controls the weather? How do you outrun someone that controls the wind?

*"And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish for three days and three nights" (Jonah 1:17).*

God controls the animal kingdom.

*"So the Lord appointed a plant and it grew up over Jonah to be a shade over his head and to deliver him from discomfort. And Jonah was extremely happy about the plant" (Jonah 4:6).*

I read that verse, and I say, "Lord, that is me." I like the air conditioning. I like creature comforts. I like cable TV to work. I love the house. But what about the people all over the city of Sugar Land and the city of Houston that do not know their right hand from their left? Jonah was really happy about the creature comforts, about the Ninevites that knew not their right hand from their left (Jonah 4:11), people walking in darkness, Jonah really was not all that concerned about it.

God deals with that by taking away the plant. How did He take away the plant? He appointed a worm.

*"But God appointed a worm when dawn came the next day and it attacked the plant and it withered" (Jonah 4:7).*

God is getting Jonah to understand: "You love your creature comforts, but you do not love the things that I want to do. Your heart is not broken over the things that break My heart." What a great prayer request that is. You want to see God answer a prayer request in your life? Try this one out: "Lord, break my heart for the things that break Your heart." You pray something like that, and you are directly in the will of God. You will start to see the hand of God move in your life in an amazing way. He will show you things that you really did not fully understand or see before.

We are so wrapped up as Americans in our very comfortable lifestyles and our version of Christianity that we are really not looking at the eternal things that break the heart of God: your neighbor or coworker that does not know Christ personally and is headed for a crisis eternity. Very little thought is given for them, but there is a lot of thought over personal success, personal comfort, and those types of things.

Jonah is brought to this place of maturity, and it is all related to the answering of prayer. God is very good at answering prayer because He controls the wind; He controls the fish; He controls the plant; He controls the worm. He has a lot of tools at His disposal to touch our lives and the lives of other people.

The east wind, in response to Moses' prayer, drives the locusts out. Where do they get driven to? These locusts are driven into the Sea area. There is the Red Sea. Here is Mount Sinai. Here is another map showing you where the Red Sea is down here.



You will notice that as these locusts were driven out, they were driven to a real place of geography. All of these places that we are reading about in the Bible—Egypt; Mount Sinai; Arabia; Midian, where Moses was for 40 years; the journey of the Israelites into the Transjordan, where they deal with the Edomites, the Moabites, and the Ammonites—these are real people, real people groups, and real places of geography. That is how your Bible reads.

Jonah went to preach to the Ninevites. There really was a Nineveh. We are not reading VeggieTales. We are not reading tall tales like "Jack and the Beanstalk." We are reading history. All of these historical sites and these places of geography almost read like Mapsco. It is a map; it is geography; it is history. That is how your Bible comes to you.

The truth of the matter is, if you cannot trust the Bible on geography, history, and archeology, if you cannot trust the Bible on the things you can see and verify, how in the world are you ever supposed to trust it on things you cannot see? Angels, demons, heaven, hell, sin, salvation, God, the triunity of God, the holiness of God? If the Bible is inaccurate on these matters, then how do you trust it on anything else that ever speaks to us authoritatively?

Living in the Southern California area, I was very close to attending a seminary. It would have been much easier for me to attend that seminary because it was local, but I decided not to attend that seminary because they would not take a position on the full inerrancy of the Bible. They said the Bible has mistakes in it related to science, archeology, geography, history, although when the Bible talks about things that we cannot see, it is inerrant without error. That is a viewpoint called partial inerrancy.

To teach at that school, the professors did not have to take a stand on full inerrancy, which to me was problematic. If the Bible is wrong on the things that I can see, how in the world could I trust on all those other things?

They would say things like, "Jesus talked about the seed which is the smallest seed, and we know that it really was not the smallest seed. Therefore, there is a mistake in the Bible related to science." They did not factor in that Jesus was not making a worldwide statement about a seed; he was making a statement about what was happening in the land of Israel. But they would boldly say that Jesus made an error.

If Jesus made an error there, then maybe Jesus makes an error when He says that your sins are forgiven, that you have eternal life when you trust in Him? Why is this statement about botany wrong, but the statement about eternal life is true?

We take a position here that the Bible is completely, 100% true. If there is something in the Bible that looks like it is an error then maybe I am misreading the Bible. Maybe I need to get more of an educated opinion about what the certain passage says.

Men like Gleason Archer, Norman Geisler, and countless others have devoted themselves to this, showing that the Bible has no mistakes in it. If you think there is a mistake in the Bible, you do not take the word of Dan Rather for it, you rethink your position. Are you reading it correctly? Because at the end of the day, God cannot lie. He cannot be wrong. So if I think there is an error in the Bible, maybe there is a problem with me and my understanding of a given passage, rather than casting doubts on the entire Bible.

People do this quite glibly, quite routinely, and I believe it is a satanic strategy. Satan knows he can create doubt and havoc in the mind of the Christian who is sitting in front of the television when the History Channel, Mysteries of the Bible, A&E, or some scholar from Harvard tells you that the Bible is wrong on a certain point. The Bible is not wrong. The Bible cannot be wrong. I can be wrong in my reading of it, but at the end of the day, the Bible itself will never be wrong.

If that is so, I can take everything it says right to the bank, including the things in the Bible that I cannot validate through eyewitness testimony: heaven, hell, angels, demons, sin, salvation, etc. That is why it will keep mentioning things like the Red Sea and Egypt, or that the children of Israel spent so much time in Goshen, which is a real place in Egypt.

That is why we will talk about how the locusts were driven to the Red sea. Look what God did. Not only did He drive the locusts out with the east wind, but look at what it says in Exodus 10:19: *"not one locust was left in all the territory of Egypt."*

Compare that to how the locusts were described when they came in with the judgment:

*"The locusts came up over all the land of Egypt and settled in the territory of Egypt; they were numerous. There had never been so many locusts, nor would there be so many again. For they covered the surface of the whole land, so that the land was darkened; and they ate every plant of the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left. Thus nothing green was left on tree or plant of the field through all of the land of Egypt" (Exodus 10:14-15).*

This was a horrific judgment. God brought it when He said he was going to bring it. Then He shifted the wind, and the emptying out of the locust was just as comprehensive as when they came in. In a nanosecond, they were gone: *"not one locust was left in all the territory of Egypt"* (Exodus 10:19).

Let me tell you something about God. God is so gracious that He can take the consequences of our sin and erase them. Did you know that? Joel and other prophets talk about that. God will restore the crops which the locusts have eaten (Joel 2:25). Isn't the Bible filled with this example of God erasing the consequences of our sin?

The greatest consequence that I have of my sin is that I am separated from God. I am alienated from God. Let me put it this way: My sin does not make me a sinner. I sin because I already am a sinner. I am just fulfilling my job description. Because we are born in Adam's lineage, we are born into this world separated from God and hurtling towards a Christ-less eternity. If a person puts their trust in Christ, that consequence which is horrific, just disappears.

*"As far as the east is from the west,  
So far has He removed our transgressions from us" (Psalm 103:12).*

I used to look at that and say, "How come it does not say as far as the north is from the south? Why does it say as far as the east is from the west?" Because there is a North Pole and there is a South Pole, but there is no East Pole or West Pole. When you say, "As far as the north is from the south," that is a finite line. When you say, "As far as the east is from the west," that is an infinite line. That is a line that goes on forever and ever and ever.

That is what Jesus offers people: "Put your trust in Me and what I did for you on the cross 2,000 years ago, and the consequence of your sin, which is the most severe, will be taken away just like that." It is a beautiful doctrine. The fancy name for it is expiation.

When the Day of Atonement happened (Leviticus 16), there were two animals that were brought in on the Day of Atonement, the 'day of covering.' One animal was released into the wilderness. The other animal was killed. The priest had to follow specific instructions, and the blood was applied once a year to the mercy seat. This canceled the nations note of indebtedness for a year. Yom Kippur, 'day of covering.'

You ask, "Why two animals? Isn't one animal enough?" One animal is not enough because God is using the two animals to teach two different things. The first is propitiation, which is the satisfaction of divine wrath. God took out His wrath against Israel's sin for that year through the first animal. The blood was applied to the mercy seat on Yom Kippur.

What is the second animal doing there? It was released into the wilderness, which revealed a second truth called expiation, meaning that the eternal consequences of your sin are now removed. This ultimately was fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Sin debt is thrown as far as the east is from the West, which is an infinite line. Animal A, propitiation; Animal B, expiation. The removal of sin's penalty, and the removal of sin's consequence. The wrath of God was satisfied with animal A—propitiation. One animal could not describe these two realities. That is why in Leviticus 16 you have not one animal, you have two animals there.

When God is so aggressive with the wind that comes in that it is almost as if the locusts were never there at all, even though what we read earlier was that a very severe judgment caused Pharaoh to cry out for help.

It is a glorious thing to know Jesus personally, to know that propitiation applies to us, that God's wrath against our sin is satisfied, and to also know that expiation applies to us. He has taken the eternal consequence of our sin and thrown it as far as the east is from the west.

The Bible says that He takes those sins and washes them in a sea of forgetfulness. I do not know how that works with God. How does God forget something? I have a tendency to think that is more anthropomorphic language, trying to get us to relate to God. You go to God and you say, "Do you remember that sin I committed earlier?" He says, "I do not. I actually do not remember that." At bare minimum He says, "I do not hold you accountable for that. That has been paid for." That is propitiation. The consequence for sin has been eternally removed is expiation.

These are what Lewis Sperry Chafer called 'salvation words.' When Lewis Sperry Chafer would teach in Bible conferences, he loved to teach the doctrine of salvation. He taught the different salvation words at his conference talk. One talk was propitiation, one talk was expiation, one talk was on atonement. He would develop these salvation concepts from the Word of God.

The locusts are gone. In fact, God says, "I am going to restore the years the locusts have consumed." My cousin was a mess, as he will tell you, prior to his salvation. This would go back to Teen Challenge years because they did not know what to do with him, with his alcohol abuse, drug abuse, every kind of abuse you can imagine. He was so out of control that my uncle and aunt took him to this place called Teen Challenge. You may have heard of that ministry. David Wilkerson founded it.

My cousin found Jesus at that ministry, and he fully expected that when he left substance abuse, he was going to go through withdrawals. Everybody expected it. His testimony to this day is that he had maybe some headaches, which is very minor relative to withdrawals. It was almost like God and love stepped out and took a consequence away. I cannot guarantee that that happens in every circumstance, but I know that it is within the outworking of God to do that kind of thing.

You may have messed up something so bad as we all do from time to time, yours truly included. You might cry out to God with a sincere heart. God in His grace might say, "I am even going to remove the earthly consequence for your decision." The eternal consequences are long gone; that is expiation.

It ends very tragically with Pharaoh hardening his heart:

*"But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the sons of Israel go" (Exodus 10:20).*

Now you say, "Pastor, I thought you said that Pharaoh hardened his heart. The Bible here says that God hardened his heart. So which is it?" If you have been with us in this study, you know the answer to that.

Ed Hindson says:

"For the initial five plagues, the text registers Pharaoh as the agent of hardening. Not until the sixth plague does God participate in the confirmation of Pharaoh's own volitional choices."<sup>1</sup>

Charles Ryrie writes:

"Seven times Pharaoh hardened his own heart before God first hardened it, though the prediction that God would do it preceded all."<sup>2</sup>

Pharaoh repeatedly hardened his own heart one, two, three, four, five, six times. Then finally with plague six God gave Pharaoh over to what he wanted to do (Exodus 9:12), which is frightening. God gives people over.

In Romans 1:18-32, I think three times in that chapter it says that God gave them over. What you learn is that God gave them over because they gave up on God.

*"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,*

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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. 86). Thomas Nelson.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Ryrie, *Ryrie Study Bible*, 96.

*because that which is known about God is within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that men are without excuse" (Romans 1:18-20).*

They suppressed the truth, so God gave them over after they first gave up on God.

That is how it works with Pharaoh. That is how it works with anybody. God is not in the business of overriding people's free will. I showed you the quote in Sunday school, for those of you that were here, where C.S. Lewis describes hell as a door locked from the inside, meaning that God does not send people to hell, but people send themselves to hell by rejecting, rejecting, rejecting, rejecting, rejecting. Then finally, God says, "I will give you what you want. I will cement the decision." It is a frightening thing.

This, of course, is a good lead into the gospel. If you are here today rejecting, do not assume that the grace of God just goes on forever. You reach a point where God gives you over to what you want. God looks to me like He has to do that because we are made in His image. Part of being made in the image of God includes volition and free will. For God to override my free will and coerce me to be a Christian or to coerce me to be a believer is for God not to respect how He manufactured me and you.

The most powerful thing you have as an image bearer of God is free will and volition. Use it wisely. Do not use it contrary to the things of God, because you reach a point, as it says in Genesis 6:3, where God says:

*"My Spirit will not strive with man forever" (Genesis 6:3).*

The Bible teaches that today is a day of salvation. If you hear His voice, place your trust in Him because He is the only one that can help you. A pastor cannot help you. An elder board cannot help you. A church cannot help you. Your friends cannot help you. Family members cannot help you. Coworkers cannot help you. But Jesus can help you. He can get you into a right relationship with the God that made you, and the God that redeemed you through the gospel.

His final words on the cross were, *"It is finished!"* (John 19:30). It is not, "I bought lunch, now you leave the tip." It is, "Trust in the completed work of Jesus for your eternity and for your salvation."