

Exodus 10
July 6, 2014

Open with Prayer

HOOK:

Mac Davis came out with a song entitled, “Lord, it’s hard to be Humble.” Here are the lyrics:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RCyYuLQ7_Ws (Play youtube link on Ipad)

Q: Is Mac right? Do you find it “hard to be humble?” If yes, why? [We are born in sin to be self-centered. Pride is at the core of our heart. The gravitational pull we fight each day is toward believing that life is about us, when it’s not.]

Q: Before we dive into today’s study, what are examples of the price paid for people who are prideful? [Pride comes before the fall, they eventually get humbled by the Lord, they turn people off, relationships can be strained...]

Pride seems to be the ongoing problem with Pharaoh. He has gone through seven plagues so far, and no sooner would the Lord release him and the Egyptians from a plague, he would harden his heart because he did not want to lose his labor force. He still wanted to be in control. There was no hint of humility in Pharaoh’s heart.

Transition: I think we are in this story. We might be Pharaoh. Is God bringing about a series of difficult circumstances in our lives because our hearts have gotten hardened? Or has He hardened our heart to get our attention? Is God trying to get us to “let go” of an agenda that does not line up with His will for us? We might be Moses. Is God allowing us to go through a difficult circumstance with a “Pharaoh” in your life? If yes, we need to stay humble before the Lord and compassionate toward the person God is working on. I want us to consider that all of us SHOULD have a humble heart in all circumstances, especially difficult ones, BECAUSE OF the CONSEQUENCES that come without it. As we read Exodus Chapter 10, let’s look for the consequences that occur when a heart is not humble before the Lord.

BOOK (NIV 1984): [Read Exodus 10:1-20]

Observations/Process Qs-

V.1:

- Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his officials so that I may perform these miraculous signs of mine among them

V.2:

- that you may tell your children and grandchildren how I dealt harshly with the Egyptians and how I performed my signs among them, and that you may know that I am the LORD.”

V.3:

- So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him, “This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: ‘How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go, so that they may worship me.

V.4:

- If you refuse to let them go, I will bring locusts into your country tomorrow.

V.5:

- They will cover the face of the ground so that it cannot be seen. They will devour what little you have left after the hail, including every tree that is growing in your fields.

V.6:

- They will fill your houses and those of all your officials and all the Egyptians—something neither your fathers nor your forefathers have ever seen from the day they settled in this land till now.’ ” Then Moses turned and left Pharaoh.

V.7:

- Pharaoh’s officials said to him, “How long will this man be a snare to us? Let the people go, so that they may worship the LORD their God. Do you not yet realize that Egypt is ruined?”

V.8:

- Then Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh. “Go, worship the LORD your God,” he said. “But just who will be going?”

V.9:

- Moses answered, “We will go with our young and old, with our sons and daughters, and with our flocks and herds, because we are to celebrate a festival to the LORD.”

V.10:

- Pharaoh said, “The LORD be with you—if I let you go, along with your women and children! Clearly you are bent on evil.

V.11:

- No! Have only the men go; and worship the LORD, since that’s what you have been asking for.” Then Moses and Aaron were driven out of Pharaoh’s presence.

V.12:

- And the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over Egypt so that locusts will swarm over the land and devour everything growing in the fields, everything left by the hail.”

V.13:

- So Moses stretched out his staff over Egypt, and the LORD made an east wind blow across the land all that day and all that night. By morning the wind had brought the locusts;

V.14:

- they invaded all Egypt and settled down in every area of the country in great numbers. Never before had there been such a plague of locusts, nor will there ever be again.

V.15:

- They covered all the ground until it was black. They devoured all that was left after the hail—everything growing in the fields and the fruit on the trees. Nothing green remained on tree or plant in all the land of Egypt.

V.16:

- Pharaoh quickly summoned Moses and Aaron and said, “I have sinned against the LORD your God and against you.

V.17:

- Now forgive my sin once more and pray to the LORD your God to take this deadly plague away from me.”

V.18:

- Moses then left Pharaoh and prayed to the Lord.

V.19:

- And the LORD changed the wind to a very strong west wind, which caught up the locusts and carried them into the Red Sea. Not a locust was left anywhere in Egypt.

V.20:

- But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and **he would not let the Israelites go.**
- Q: So what are some of the consequences that the Egyptians incurred because of Pharaoh's hardened heart? How about the Israelites? [See yellow highlights]
- Q: So what is a clear sign of having a hardened heart? [V. 3 - One who refuses to humble themselves before the Lord who has clearly revealed Himself.]
- Q: How are Pharaoh's officials feeling at this point? [V.7 – They are questioning Pharaoh's decision-making. They see their predicament!]
- Q: Look at V.10-11. What does Pharaoh think Moses requested? How accurately was he listening? [He distorted the request. Moses never said "men only."]

[Read Exodus 10:21-29]

V.21:

- Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky so that darkness will spread over Egypt—darkness that can be felt."

V.22:

- So Moses stretched out his hand toward the sky, and **total darkness covered all Egypt for three days.**

V.23:

- No one could see anyone else or leave his place for three days. **Yet all the Israelites had light in the places where they lived.**

V.24:

- Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and said, "**Go, worship the LORD. Even your women and children may go with you; only leave your flocks and herds behind.**"

V.25:

- But Moses said, "You must allow us to have sacrifices and burnt offerings to present to the LORD our God.

V.26:

- Our livestock too must go with us; not a hoof is to be left behind. We have to use some of them in worshiping the LORD our God, and until we get there we will not know what we are to use to worship the LORD."

V.27:

- But the **LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he was not willing to let them go.**
- Q: Is it possible that the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart again because he wasn't willing to fulfill the request of Moses in its entirety?

V.28:

- Pharaoh said to Moses, "Get out of my sight! Make sure you do not appear before me again! The day you see my face you will die."
- Observation: Moses received a death threat.

V.29:

- "Just as you say," Moses replied, "I will never appear before you again."

- Q: So what are some of the consequences that the Egyptians incurred because of Pharaoh's hardened heart? How about the Israelites? [See yellow highlights]
- Q: What is Pharaoh now willing to consider with regard to who can go to the desert to worship the Lord? [V.23-24: men, women and children – but not animals]
- Q: Why do you think Pharaoh won't honor the complete request? [V.10 – He believes Moses is bent on evil; he feels threatened by their absence; he sees a lost economy]

LOOK:

Q: At a practical level, how do we cultivate a humble heart, or that spirit of humility?

Accept your Limitations

- Admit that you're not the best at everything, or anything. There is always someone out there who can do something better than we can.
- Recognize your own faults. We tend to judge others because it's easier than looking at ourselves in the mirror.
- Be grateful for what you have. You may have a top degree, a top job, be recognized as a top researcher in your field, but in the end, be content and grateful for where the Lord has you.
- Don't be afraid to make mistakes and admit them when it happens as part of an apology. Part of being humble is to understand that we all make mistakes. (Rom 3:23)
- Avoid bragging. If you're really that great, other people will recognize your efforts and compliment you. (Prov 16:18, 29:23)
- Be reserved in conversations. It's like the Stephen Covey principle: Seek to understand before being understood. Have a genuine, focused interest in what other people have to say. It shows that you value their thoughts and opinions as much as your own. (Phil 2:3)
- Don't take all the credit –if any. Even if you accomplished something amazing, did you really do it without the help of the Lord? (John 15:1-5)

Appreciate Others:

- Appreciate the talents and qualities of others. When you appreciate other qualities, a person with a humble heart desires to improve themselves because they are inspired by what they see in someone else.
- Stop comparing yourself to others. It's hard to be humble if you're always trying to be "better" than someone else. God says we are all unique, so it's hard to say who "is the best" at something!
- Be willing to defer to other people's judgments. You may not be right! Even people who disagree with you may be right. I love former President Bill Clinton's quote at the Democratic Convention: "Even a broken clock is right twice a day."
- Remain teachable. Being teachable means you always have more to learn.
- Help others. When you're humble, you respect others. And out of respect for others, you help them because it's the right thing to do.

Ask God through prayer to help us develop a spirit of humility that is evidenced in our interactions with others.

Meditate on the Word of God daily:

Col 3:12 “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, *humility*, gentleness, and patience.

Eph 4:2 “Be *completely humble* and gentle; be patient bearing with one another in love.”

Titus 3:2 “Remind the people...to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and to *show true humility* toward all men.”

Close in Prayer

Commentaries for Today's Lesson:

Wiersbe, W. W. (1993). *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament (Ex 5–10)*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

III. The Compromises

Pharaoh is a type of Satan: he was the god of Egypt; he had supreme power (except where limited by God); he was a liar; he was a murderer; he kept people in bondage; he hated the Word of God and the people of God. Pharaoh did not want to release the Jews, so he offered four subtle compromises:

A. Worship God in the land (8:25–27).

God demands complete separation from the world; the friendship of the world is enmity with God (James 4:4). Since the Egyptians worshiped cows, they would be offended if they saw the Jews sacrificing their cattle to Jehovah. The believer must “come out and be separate” (2 Cor. 6:17).

B. Do not go too far away (8:28).

“Don’t be a fanatic!” says the world. “It’s fine to have religion, but don’t get too serious about it.” Here we have the temptation to be “borderline believers,” trying to stay close to the world and close to the Lord at the same time.

C. Only the men should go (10:7–11).

This meant leaving the wives and children in the world. Faith involves the whole family, not the men only. It is the privilege of the husband and father to lead the family into the blessings of the Lord.

D. Keep your possessions in Egypt (10:24–26).

Satan loves to get hold of our material wealth so that we cannot use it for the Lord. All that we have belongs to Christ. And Jesus tells us, “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matt. 6:21). What a tragedy to rob God by leaving our “flocks and herds” for Satan to use (Mal. 3:8–10). Moses refused each of these compromises because he could not compromise with Satan and the world and still please God. We may think that we have won a victory by pacifying the world, but we are mistaken. God demands total obedience, complete separation. This was to be effected by the blood of the lamb and by the crossing of the Red Sea, pictures of Christ’s death on the cross and our resurrection with Him, delivering us from “this present evil world” (Gal. 1:4).

Toussaint, S. D. (1985). *Acts*. (J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck, Eds.) *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*. (Vol. 2, pp. 124–125). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

h. Plague 8: Locusts (10:1–20)

This record of the eighth plague can be divided into four sections: the instructions to Moses (vv. 1–6), the discourse with Pharaoh (vv. 7–11), the destruction by the locusts (vv. 12–15), and the humbling and hardening of Pharaoh (vv. 16–20).

10:1–6. This plague reveals another purpose for the judgments. Besides humbling Pharaoh and bringing about Israel’s deliverance, the plagues showed *Israel* God’s power, which they were to **tell** to their **children and grandchildren**. By these **signs** Israel would **know that** God is **the LORD** (Yahweh).

If Pharaoh refused to **humble** himself **before** God, then God would bring a terrible locust infestation. **Locusts**, flying by the millions, can completely devastate miles of crops (cf. Joel 1:2–7; Amos 7:1–3), eating leaves and even tree bark. Much of a city’s or a nation’s food supply from crops can be wiped out completely in minutes or hours.

What the previous plague of hail did not destroy—wheat and spelt (9:32), fruit (10:15), and other field vegetation (10:12, 15)—would now be devoured. Like the frogs (8:3–4) and flies (8:21, 24), the locusts would enter people’s **houses**. Like the hail (9:18) the locust invasion was unprecedented in Egypt (10:6; cf. v. 14).

10:7–11. Such extensive economic disaster caused **Pharaoh’s officials** to realize that retaining their slaves was not worth the price: **Egypt**, they said, **is ruined**. So **Pharaoh** succumbed to Moses’ general petition and said **Go** (v. 8). Though **Moses** never said he would return the people, Pharaoh sensed they would be gone permanently if they took all their family members, **flocks, and herds** (v. 9). This, he said, was **evil**. So he introduced another compromise (cf. 8:25, 28): **Have only the men go** (10:11). **Moses and Aaron**, unwilling to settle for this compromise, were expelled (*gāraš*; cf. comments on 2:22; 6:1) from the court.

10:12–15. As a result of Pharaoh’s impiety and stubbornness, God told **Moses** to **stretch out** his **hand** (cf. 9:22; 10:21) **so that locusts** would come. He extended **his staff** and **an east wind** blew **all ... day**. Some say “east wind” means “fierce wind” because normally winds blow across **Egypt** from the south. However, this interpretation is strained because later (v. 19) Moses referred to a west wind which carried the **locusts** into the Red Sea (lit., “Sea of [Papyrus] Reeds”; cf. NIV marg. and comments on 14:2). The devastation was beyond imagination; their numbers were so massive that **the ground ... was black** (10:15). **All ... Egypt** was affected. **Egypt** was deprived of her natural beauty with tragic economic, social, and theological consequences. Nut, the Egyptian sky goddess, could not control these locusts and Osiris, god of crop fertility, could not prevent the destruction of the crops.

10:16–20. **Pharaoh** again repented of his sin (cf. 9:27) and pleaded for relief, but his actions revealed an impenitent heart. In response to Moses’ petition God relented of this judgment and Pharaoh again impiously repudiated his promise.

i. Plague 9: Darkness (10:21–29)

10:21–23. Like the third and sixth plagues this ninth judgment came without warning. When Moses extended **his hand** (cf. 9:22; 10:12–13), the land was draped with a thick cloak of **darkness ... for three days**, except in the land of Goshen. The exact nature of the **darkness** is uncertain, but since Goshen was spared it could not have been an eclipse of the sun. Some interpret **darkness that can be felt** (10:21) to mean a massive sandstorm with its darkness and heat that would cause people to seek shelter. With the land bare from the loss of crops by hail

and locusts, a sandstorm, possibly flowing from the south in March, would have been unusually fierce.

This plague was aimed at one of the chief Egyptian deities, the sun god Re, of whom Pharaoh was a representation. Re was responsible for providing sunlight, warmth, and productivity. Other gods, including Horus, were associated with the sun. Nut, the goddess of the sky, would have been humiliated by this plague (as well as by the plagues of hail and locusts).

10:24–29. In his misery **Pharaoh summoned Moses and said** he was willing to let him leave with the people, but not with their **flocks and herds**. This was Pharaoh's fourth attempted compromise (cf. 8:25, 28; 10:11). These animals, if retained, would help replenish Egypt's loss of animal life in the fifth and seventh plagues. **But Moses** was uncompromising to the minutest degree (**not a hoof is to be left behind**). He insisted that the people had been called to **worship** and therefore they would not leave behind any animals of sacrifice.

In belligerence **Pharaoh** ordered **Moses ... out of** his presence. **Moses** calmly **replied** that he would **never** return **before** him **again**. However, this seems to be contradicted by the confrontation Moses and Aaron had with Pharaoh later (12:31). This can be explained by understanding Moses to have said (in 10:29) that, because of Pharaoh's raging, Moses would not go to him in mercy with a word from God. In other words, if Moses saw Pharaoh again, it would be to announce unavoidable judgment or it would be at Pharaoh's request to grant Moses and the Israelites permission to leave the land.

For practical ideas on how to cultivate humility in our lives, see suggestions at:
<http://www.wikihow.com/Be-Humble>