

Exodus Chapter 10 Continued

Exodus 10:21 "And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness [which] may be felt."

The ninth plague brought darkness so thick it could "be felt".

Such as description of the ninth plague, that occurred without warning, pointed to the most unusual nature of the three day darkness that now prevented any from leaving their homes. That Israel had light in their dwellings and went about their normal activity stresses the super natural nature of this plague. It takes attention away from trying to explain the darkness solely in terms of the Khamsin, the swirling sandstorms of the day.

The LXX did, however, string together 3 Greek words, two for darkness and one for storm, to portray the nuance of the Hebrew. In so doing, it may unwittingly have given some credence to a severe sandstorm. Theologically, such thick darkness directly challenged the faithfulness of the sun god, Ra, to provide warmth and sunshine from day to day, and also prevented any daily worship rituals from taking place.

In the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:20), we read of another terrible darkness that shall come upon the earth at the end of the age.

Acts 2:20 "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:"

God had used darkness of this magnitude several times, in punishment of those who did not follow Him. This darkness was so heavy, that there was not even the moon and stars shining. It was really a frightening darkness. In Pharaoh's case, he had no way of knowing, if God would let it remain that way or not. Darkness, throughout the Bible is symbolic of those who are away from God. The worst darkness is that of the spirit; when our understanding of God is darkness. The Lord Jesus is the Light. Darkness would be the total absence of His Light.

John 8:12 "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

We see from all of this, that there is a physical darkness and a spiritual darkness. Both are very bad. I believe this overwhelming darkness that came on Egypt, was both physical and spiritual.

Exodus 10:22 "And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days:"

The ninth plague came without warning. The darkness struck at the very heart of Egyptian theology and practice. It humbled one of the greatest Egyptian gods, the sun god Re. It is ironic that the Pharaoh should choose to use such ideas as "sight," "appear," and "see" (verse 28) in the midst of "thick darkness.

Even a normal eclipse was often considered an omen, but this one lasted for “three days.

Exodus 10:23 "They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings."

The people of Israel, in the land of Goshen, were again exempt from this plague.

If you were to look at this from the spiritual standpoint, you would have to look at the 3 hours that darkness was over the land (in the middle of the day), when Jesus was crucified.

Matthew 27:45 "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour."

Mark 15:33 "And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour".

The number "three" has to do with the Trinity of God. We see in the three hours and in the three days of darkness, God dealing with mankind about their darkened hearts. This ninth plague of darkness upon the land was not just darkness, but an overwhelming darkness of the spiritual and the physical. This darkness, the Egyptians were feeling, was total darkness where they could not even safely walk through their own houses without danger. This darkness did not prevail in the Hebrew homes. We read that there was light in their homes. The light that shone in the Hebrew homes was the miraculous Light of the Lord. This darkness had nothing to do with things like an eclipse or dust storms or such. This was pitch darkness without a glimmer of light anywhere. This darkness was day and night. This darkness was a miracle from God.

Exodus 10:24 "And Pharaoh called unto Moses, and said, Go ye, serve the LORD; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed: let your little ones also go with you."

“Go ... little ones also go with you”: Pharaoh’s deceitful and manipulative negotiating skills rose to the occasion: Let the people go but keep back their livestock as hostage forcing their return. He had not yet understood that partial obedience to the Lord’s directions was unacceptable.

Pharaoh proposed yet another compromise: allowing the “little ones” to go with the adults into the wilderness if they left the “flocks ... herds” behind.

Here, we see Pharaoh weakening with each plague. This plague of darkness was so depressing, that Pharaoh now conceded and said they could carry their children into the wilderness to worship but he was still holding out to keep their livestock, so that they would have to come back. He (Pharaoh), wanted to keep them for the virtually free labor. Undoubtedly here, he was thinking that if they ran off he would at least have their animals.

Exodus 10:25 "And Moses said, Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the LORD our God."

See (3:18), for remarks on the request to leave for worship suggesting something less than permanent departure.

Exodus 10:26 "Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not a hoof be left behind; for thereof must we take to serve the LORD our God; and we know not with what we must serve the LORD, until we come thither."

Most likely Pharaoh planned to confiscate all of Israel's livestock to replace what his people had lost through the earlier plagues; then he would send his army to retrieve the Hebrew people.

Moses and Aaron rejected the offer because they knew they must obey God completely and that meant leaving "not a hoof ... behind.

Here we see Moses telling Pharaoh that all the animals were to go with them as well; because some of them would be used to sacrifice to God. Whether it had been the plan all along to not come back (once they got 3 days journey from Pharaoh) or not; I am not sure. I know this had been the fear of Pharaoh from the beginning. God had never wavered in His message that He had sent Pharaoh by Moses and Aaron. God had Moses to tell Pharaoh from the beginning, that all were to go. It was Pharaoh that had been trying to find some way to hang onto these Hebrews.

Exodus 10:27 "But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go."

God was going to carry these plagues out, until all ten were fulfilled. "Ten" has to do with world government. We will see in these ten plagues that God would overcome the world.

Exodus 10:28 "And Pharaoh said unto him, Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in [that] day thou seest my face thou shalt die."

"Get thee from me ... thou shalt die": Pharaoh's obstinacy and resistance reached a new height when he summarily dismissed Moses and Aaron and this time added a death threat.

Moses' response "see my face no more" contains a sense of poetic justice, certainly not an intended prophecy by Pharaoh!

Pharaoh was furious. This was not the custom of Orientals to be quick tempered, but Pharaoh could see about 700 or 800 thousand laborers slipping through his fingers; and he was mad. He told Moses that he better not come back to see him, because Pharaoh would order him killed. He forgot that the last several times that Moses appeared before him, it was Pharaoh who had summoned Moses, not the other way around. His threat to take the life of Moses and Aaron actually sealed his own doom. What you sow, you reap. Pharaoh himself had pronounced the tenth plague.

Exodus 10:29 "And Moses said, Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more."

"See thy face again no more": Moses concurred, but from another perspective than that of Pharaoh. All negotiations and requests ceased immediately. Moses would be summoned to see

Pharaoh again after the tenth plague (12:31), but that would be to hear him finally concede defeat.

In this Moses was saying, even if you send for me to come and pray to God for you, I will not. Moses probably meant by this, that once I leave, I will not return. It appears that he didn't leave, until the tenth plague was spoken. Actually, if we will look at these plagues, we will see that this last one that comes is in way of judgment spoken upon Egypt.

Exodus Chapter 10 Continued Questions

1. What was a special description of this darkness that God sent on Egypt?
2. In Acts 2:20, what terrible darkness do we read about?
3. Who did God bring this darkness upon?
4. What is darkness symbolic of throughout the Bible?
5. Which is worse, spiritual darkness, or physical darkness?
6. Darkness is what?
7. If you are a believer, you shall not walk in _____.
8. What does the author believe about this darkness, that came on Egypt?
9. What type of darkness came over the land, when Moses stretched forth his hand?
10. How long did the darkness prevail?
11. How long was it dark, when Jesus was on the cross?
12. What 2 books of the New Testament tell us about this darkness?
13. What does "3" mean spiritually?
14. What was God showing them in the 3 days of darkness?
15. Which plague was the plague of darkness?
16. What separates the Hebrews from the Egyptians, during this plague?
17. What did Pharaoh offer Moses to stop the darkness?
18. What did Pharaoh hold back?
19. What did Moses tell Pharaoh was the reason they needed the animals?

20. What had been the fear of Pharaoh from the beginning?
21. In these 10 plagues, we see what?
22. What was Pharaoh feeling when Moses did not accept his offer?
23. Why?
24. What had Pharaoh threatened to do to Moses, if he came before Pharaoh again?
25. What had Pharaoh forgotten?
26. What had Pharaoh done in this threat on Moses' life?
27. What was Moses' reply to Pharaoh?
28. What did Moses mean by this statement?
29. This last plague was in way of _____.
30. What was this tenth plague a retribution for?
31. What was the estimate of the 3 million people of Israel based upon?