

Calvary
in
Egypt



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While it was an amazing thing for Moses to see the burning bush and have the Lord speak to him from it, it was something beyond comprehension for Moses to do what the Lord was asking him—deliver the children of Israel from Egypt! How could that be possible?

The Lord explained what would happen and how He would deal with the situation.

Exo 3:18-20 And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God. (19) And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand. (20) **And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go.**

Now this seems strange when we consider that Moses has just spent 40 years in exile from Egypt for beginning to do what it appears the Lord is about to do to the Egyptians.

Exo 2:11-12 And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. (12) And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.

If God was planning to smite Egyptians, destroy all their cattle, drop hail stones on them and wipe out all their firstborn then wasn't Moses simply getting things started by killing one of them? Notice what inspiration tells us:

In slaying the Egyptian, Moses had fallen into the same error so often committed by his fathers, of taking into their own hands the work that God had promised to do. It was not God's will to deliver His people by warfare, as Moses thought, but by His own mighty power, that the glory might be ascribed to Him alone. Yet even this rash act was overruled by God to accomplish His purposes. Moses was not prepared for his great work. He had yet to learn the same lesson of faith that Abraham and

Jacob had been taught—not to rely upon human strength or wisdom, but upon the power of God for the fulfillment of His promises. PP 247

What do we understand by this? Do we believe it was wrong for Moses to kill Egyptians and yet it is ok for God to kill them? At this point many will reply, “It is not for us to question God’s actions. He is God and this is simply the way it is.” Yet this does not address the question of how this is in any sense loving or consistent. This is an issue that needs clarity. If we read this passage again it seems to indicate that God is going to use force to convince Pharaoh to let Israel go.

Exo 3:19-20 But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless a mighty hand compels him. (20) So I will stretch out my hand and strike the Egyptians with all the wonders that I will perform among them. After that, he will let you go. (NIV)

What is this mighty hand that compels people? A simple reading of the text suggests that God is indeed going to force Pharaoh to let them go. Does this then suggest a picture of God grabbing Pharaoh by the collar and violently thrusting him up against the wall and telling him to let the people go? We might then ask why go through all the contrived niceties of asking? Why doesn’t Moses just walk in and say, “We are leaving and whoever tries to touch us will be slaughtered.”

If you have done any reading of Scripture you must see the apparent contradiction in God using force when His Son says things like this:

Matt 5:39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

Luke 9:54-56 And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? (55) But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. (56) For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.

How do we reconcile these things when Jesus says:

John 14:10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

John 5:19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

So how do we reconcile this apparent contradiction? On describing the plagues the psalmist declared:

Psa 78:43-49 How he had wrought his signs in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan: (44) And had turned their rivers into blood; and their floods, that they could not drink. (45) He sent divers sorts of flies among them, which devoured them; and frogs, which destroyed them. (46) He gave also their increase unto the caterpillar, and their labour unto the locust. (47) He destroyed their vines with hail, and their sycamore trees with frost. (48) He gave up their cattle also to the hail, and their flocks to hot thunderbolts. (49) **He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them.**

This verse connects the activities of the plagues with the work of evil angels. The Hebrew word for evils in this verse רַעֲוִים *ra'im* is the same word as found in the statement about the tree of good and evil רַעַר *ra* (Gen 3:5) and also when God looked upon the world in Noah's day and saw that it was filled with wickedness רַעַר *ra'at* (Gen 6:5).

Some begin to sigh with relief and explain it was not God that did it after all, it was Satan and the evil angels that did these things. This answer does not necessarily fix the apparent contradiction but rather complicates it with the suggestion that Satan is on the Lord's payroll. Apparently when He needs a job done, He sends in the angelic mafia. Isn't this how many governments around the world work when they need to bring in some tough legislation? They call on the secret services to stage an event that causes everyone to cry out for protection and tougher laws? Is this simply the principle of good Cop and bad Cop or white Pope and black Pope? Is the Bible actually laid upon a

foundation of black and white tiles or should we place the symbol of ying/yang on its cover?

This is where some people are led into a trap. The logic is tempting to conceive that it is not God's power that destroys but Satan's power. It is tempting to get God off the hook but as Eve found out when she tried to embellish the Word of God, it only led to her downfall. God never told her not to touch the fruit, only that she should not eat it. Eve added that they were not to touch it and when the fruit was in her hand and she felt no consequences, she then reasoned that God must have been wrong based on her own incorrect assertion.

It is a dangerous assumption to assert that the power of God is not used to destroy. It requires us to ignore the plain statements of Scripture and forces God to plead innocence in much the same way that Eve did when asked about why she ate the fruit claiming it was the serpent's fault.

Note carefully what Scripture tells us:

Gen 6:7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

How do you respond to a text like that and not spiritualize its meaning. If you have been following carefully and you believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, then at this point the tension should be completely unbearable. But it is only when tension becomes unbearable that the process of new birth can begin.

The reason why our minds begin to melt down in trying to seriously resolve this conflict is that a lie has been planted in our minds born of the seed told our first parents that "you shall not surely die." This lie brought to the human family the teaching of the serpent that there is power that exists outside of God. If there did exist a power apart from God then we could live without Him. So the lie of the serpent creates the idea of at least two power sources in the universe. Allowing ourselves to believe that there are the forces of

good and evil receiving their power from separate sources is perfectly calculated to make it impossible to unravel the apparent contradiction found in the plagues of Egypt. Creation shows us that darkness and cold do not generate themselves but they exist in the absence of light and heat. Darkness is not a separate independent power but rather it is the shutting out of the light.

Matt 6:22-23 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. (23) But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

Note carefully that Jesus says that if the light that is in you be darkness then how great is that darkness. Jesus is the light which lights every man that comes into the world. (John 1:9) If we suppress this truth in unrighteousness (Rom 1:18) then Christ indeed is crucified afresh (Heb 6:6) in order that men may live by the power of Christ (1 Cor 1:24) without His abiding presence. (John 14:23).

Contrary to the Serpent's lie, there is only one power in the universe.

Psa 62:11 God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that **power belongeth unto God**. Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work.

Rom 13:1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. **For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.**

Acts 17:25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

Upon all created things is seen the impress of the Deity. Nature testifies of God. The susceptible mind, brought in contact with the miracle and mystery of the universe, cannot but recognize the working of infinite power. Not by its own inherent energy does the earth produce its bounties, and year by year continue its motion around the sun. An unseen hand guides the planets in their circuit of the heavens. A mysterious life pervades all nature—a life that sustains the unnumbered worlds throughout immensity, that lives in the insect atom which floats

in the summer breeze, that wings the flight of the swallow and feeds the young ravens which cry, that brings the bud to blossom and the flower to fruit. The **same power** that upholds nature, is working also in man. The same great laws that guide alike the star and the atom control human life. The laws that govern the heart's action, regulating the flow of the current of life to the body, are the laws of the mighty Intelligence that has the jurisdiction of the soul. From Him all life proceeds. Ellen White, *Education* 99.

All Power from God.-"God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God." Ps. lxii. 11. "There is no power but of God." **This is absolutely true, without any exception. The Roman power, even in the days of the infamous and brutal Nero, was as much derived from God as was the Jewish power in the days of David.** When Pilate told Christ that He had power to crucify Him or to let Him go, Christ replied, "Thou couldest have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above." John xix. 11. E.J Waggoner, *Present Truth*, March 21, 1895.

We know from the Word of inspiration that power "belongeth unto God;" that indeed, "there is no power but of God." Ps. 62:11; Rom. 13:1. God upholds all things by "the word of his power." Heb. 1:3. "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things," and "in him we live, and move, and have our being." **Earthly power is the power of God, perverted by sin. The Creator so respects man's free will, that he gives him power to do that which is contrary to the divine will. This power however is limited;** but God gives man unlimited power to do that which is according to his will. The unlimited power of God is manifested through the Holy Spirit. And therefore it is written of the work of God, "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." A.T Jones, *American Sentinel*, August 25, 1898.

Note carefully these words from A.T Jones in the above quote.

Earthly power is the power of God, perverted by sin. The Creator so respects man's free will, that he gives him power to do that which is contrary to the divine will. This power however is limited; *ibid*.

This gives context to the discussion of God with Satan in the time of Job.

Job 1:8-12 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? (9) Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? (10) Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. (11) But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. (12) And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

Why does Satan say to God “But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.” Why does he not say, “Let me use my power to afflict Job,” and further to this, why does Satan even talk to God. If He has his own separate power why does he not use it to undermine God’s protection of Job? Why does he need permission to touch Job? Simply because power belongs to God and there is no power but of God. This brings us to the stories of the rod that turned to a serpent and the hand that turned to leprosy. Moses wonders how Pharaoh could ever let Israel go.

Exo 4:1 And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee.

The narrative that follows is not the mighty God of heaven showing Moses a few magician’s card tricks to impress him. The illustrations are deeply significant and they explain to us the process by which Pharaoh will be compelled to let Israel go. Before we continue, let us remind ourselves of the principles of God’s kingdom.

It is no part of Christ’s mission to compel men to receive Him. It is Satan, and men actuated by his spirit, that seek to compel the conscience. DA 487

The earth was dark through misapprehension of God. That the gloomy shadows might be lightened, that the world might be brought back to God, Satan’s deceptive power was to be broken. This could not be done

by force. **The exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God's government; He desires only the service of love; and love cannot be commanded; it cannot be won by force or authority.** Only by love is love awakened. To know God is to love Him; His character must be manifested in contrast to the character of Satan. DA 22.

God does not force men to submit nor does He kill men to cause us to submit. This is the principle of the wicked one who will cause all to be killed who do not receive the mark of the beast.

Let us note the first illustration given to Moses.

Exo 4:2-5 And the LORD said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. (3) And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. (4) And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand: (5) That they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.

A rod or staff is a symbol of power. In kingly terms this is called a Sceptre. Christ the Son of God has a Sceptre.

Heb 1:8 But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.

Christ is also referred to as this Sceptre.

Num 24:17 I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

Christ is the power of God (1 Cor 1:24) and is at the right hand of God (Heb 1:3). He is referred to as God's right hand or what we would call "His right hand man."

Exo 15:6 Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.

God tells Moses that he will represent God and Aaron will be his spokesman.
(Ex 4:16)

When Moses released the rod and it fell to the ground, the power that is in Christ became serpent like. Christ is the power of God. When God said to Satan "Behold, all that he hath is in thy power;" (Job 1:12) God was dropping His rod to the ground. The rod is Christ who is compelled by Satan to serve his own purpose even as Satan inspired the Roman soldiers to compel Christ to carry the cross to the hill of Calvary.

Ponder it carefully. The minds of the Roman soldiers are controlled by Satan, yet the breath by which they live is the life that lights every man that comes into the world. The power of Christ in the souls of men is used by Satan to nail Him to the cross. Just stop and ponder that for a moment. The single image of a Roman soldier with hammer held high and driving a spike into those precious hands of the Saviour holds the key to the plagues of Egypt and all the power of destruction manifested on the earth. Here is the rod that falls to the ground:

Mark 14:35 And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

Where ever men fall to the ground under a destructive force, there is the rod that falls to the ground and becomes a serpent.

Mark 9:20 And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming.

Therefore we can see that where ever we see the suffering of men we see:

Isa 63:9 In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

When Moses dropped the rod and it became a serpent, Christ was teaching him about the Cross. More closely it is the pole or rod with the serpent upon it.

Num 21:8 And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

The fiery serpent is the old serpent called the Devil and Satan (Rev 12:9). The serpent upon the pole is Satan using the power of Christ to serve his own ends according to his own choice.

We restate the words of A.T. Jones in the realms of Satan.

Satanic power is the power of God, perverted by sin. The Creator so respects *Satan's* free will, that he gives him power to do that which is contrary to the divine will. This power however is limited; A.T Jones, *American Sentinel*, August 25, 1898. Adapted.

Jesus tells us:

John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

Of course this refers to the bronze serpent upon the pole but this is not the only place where the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness.

Exo 4:4 And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand:

Moses had to pick up the serpent by the tail. The tail is the last part of the serpent. God said to the serpent:

Gen 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Christ was bruised on his heel. Moses picked up the serpent by the tail. This is a symbol of the cross that allowed the power of God to be turned back into a rod that was back in the hands of Moses who represented God.

2 Cor 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Christ was made to be sin in allowing His power to be placed in the hands of Satan. In order for Satan to have the capacity to reveal his kingdom, the power in Christ was made to serve the wishes of Satan. Therefore the person of Christ was and is crucified in all the evil angels. His power dwells within them but they crucify His person in their hatred of His character. And so it is with every fallen son and daughter of Adam. Christ is crucified afresh in the souls of those who cherish self over Christ.

The power of Christ dwelt in all the souls of the Egyptians. The killing of any person requires the torture of the person of Christ. Can you imagine an Egyptian mother holding her dead son bent over his lifeless form sobbing out her agony of spirit? Here Christ is afflicted in her affliction, here the cross is raised and Christ is crucified afresh. When God allows Satan to take the power of His Son, He plucks out His own eye.

Psa 78:50 He made a way to his *anger*; [H639 nose, face] he spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the *pestilence*; [H1698 – destroying]

This verse is describing the plagues of Egypt. It says God made a way to His face. His beloved Son is the delight of His life. In allowing the Egyptians to die at the hands of the destroyer, He allowed the agony and suffering of His Son and so the Father stood alone in this darkness and wept for His Son during the plagues of Egypt and for all that His Son wept for.

God established this truth about the rod with a second miracle.

Exo 4:6 And the LORD said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow.

The Son of God is the right hand of the Father. Where does the Son dwell?

John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time; **the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father**, he hath declared him.

When God reached into His bosom and touched the place where His Son dwelt, His Son was made sin for us. Leprosy is a symbol of sin and the hand in this condition represents the power of Christ without His Spirit. (James 2:26) The flesh becomes dead to anything and can't feel anything. Christ is made numb by the horrors of death and destruction caused by Satan. He is made to drink the bitter sop in agony of spirit.

The agony of Christ and the allusion to the cross is revealed in the first plague. Moses and Aaron were commanded to take the rod that became a serpent which symbolised the power of Christ being given over to the hands of Satan.

Exo 7:15 Get thee unto Pharaoh in the morning; lo, he goeth out unto the water; and thou shalt stand by the river's brink against he come; and the rod which was turned to a serpent shalt thou take in thine hand.

Exo 7:19 And the LORD spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and stretch out thine hand upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all their pools of water, that they may become blood; and that there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood, and in vessels of stone.

As Jesus pleaded with His Father in the garden, he sweat drops of blood. Shortly after this he said to the mob coming to get him "this is your hour and the power of darkness." (Luke 22:53). As the rod was lifted over the waters, so Christ was lifted up before the people to be tortured and killed. The water represents the people and it also represents the Spirit of Christ. As the rod was struck upon the water, so Christ was handed over to Satan and the disciples fled according to the prophecy.

Matt 26:31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

All water turned to blood meaning that throughout the land of Egypt the Spirit of Christ was vexed and tortured in connection with the souls of those men and women. This was not only the Egyptians but also the Israelites. This event also gives an omen of the future cry of the God's people "His blood be on us and on our children."(Matt 27:25).

This first plague indicated that God had handed over His Son to allow Satan to begin to destroy the Egyptians through the power that is in Christ. Satan had dragged the Egyptians deep into idolatry and wickedness and their cup of iniquity was fast filling up. Satan had been demanding that they be handed over. They had rejected the wisdom of Joseph and despised the grace of God in saving them from the drought. This drought came because of the wickedness of men in refusing to heed His commandments and statutes.

Deu 11:13-17 And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, (14) That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil. (15) And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full. (16) Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them; (17) And then the LORD'S wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you.

The great famine in Egypt was a warning that the Spirit of God was being withdrawn because of a refusal to acknowledge the sovereignty of God and His commandments. The Egyptians had opportunity to know of the commandments and statutes of God through Abraham. They had encountered Abraham and saw what happened when they transgressed the law of God in relation to him.

The rain was specifically connected to the Sabbaths.

Lev 26:2-4 Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD. (3) If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; (4) Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.

Due to the slavery in Egypt, the Sabbath was abandoned by most of the Israelites. If the Israelites had been able to continue keeping the Sabbath, then they would have been like Paul upon the Roman ship that crashed into Malta. They would have given Egypt more time to turn from their wickedness.

This is why the request was made for Israel to go and keep a feast in the wilderness.

Exo 5:1 And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.

This request was not a deception to escape the Egyptians. This was a call to come back to the commandments of God, so that God's people could begin to intercede for Egypt that they also might turn to God. Moses had already encouraged them to begin keeping the weekly Sabbath.

Exo 5:5 And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now are many, and ye make them **rest** [Shabat] from their burdens.

God was now encouraging them to take the next step towards the Sabbath in keeping a feast. If they had been able to keep this feast and return then the plagues could have been averted a little longer. Notice what Moses said to Pharaoh:

Exo 5:3 And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath met with us: let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the LORD our God; lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword. [drought]

The word for sword also means drought. What feast expressly indicated that it would bring rain?

Zec 14:16-17 And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. (17) And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

Why did Israel wish to go into the wilderness to sacrifice? So they could avoid offending the Egyptians with slaying animals that were sacred to them. Was it also to conduct a pilgrim feast where they would live in booths? We do not know over what time frame the plagues took place. The seventh plague of the hail took place around the time of the new year because the barley was in its first fruit state. (Ex 9:31). It took Considerable time from the first request to observe a feast in Exodus 5:1 till all the plagues were completed at the time of Passover. All the events related to making bricks without straw and trials of the Israelites and then the plagues suggest it is probable that this pilgrim feast was a prototype of the feast of Tabernacles they were seeking to observe.

The Lord wanted to save Egypt from destruction. If Pharaoh would give his permission for Israel to keep a feast then he would be responsible for the action they took and would therefore benefit from the feast the Israelites engaged in. This is why God did not simply tell Pharaoh we are leaving. God did not want to leave the Egyptians to the mercy of Satan. He wanted to save them!

The Sabbath reform first in the weekly Sabbath followed up by an annual Sabbath was the method the Lord chose to bring about this reform and rebuild a hedge of protection for them. Through these statutes God could continue to protect the Israelites.

In the final crisis, when God's commandments and statutes are completely despised, shall we appeal to leaders in a gentle way to allow us to serve God

according to the Scripture that they might reap the fruits of allowing us. Of course if they say no, then we can't obey them; but if they say yes, we may be able to save them. We need to think carefully about how we address the Sabbath issue in the final crisis.

Was the Lord sending a warning to Egypt in the miracle of the frogs that Satan would try to twist the story of the cross found in the first plague and turn it into a lie?

Rev 16:13-14 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. (14) For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

Rev 13:13-14 And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, (14) **And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast;** saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

At the trial of Christ deception was used to bring about his death. Through these lies the sentence of death was secured against Christ.

Satan was working hard to deceive the people about what was taking place. In counterfeiting the water turning to blood (Exodus 7:22), the people were deceived into thinking their false gods would save them. These lies sealed their doom. The frog was worshipped by the Egyptians. God warned them through the suggestion that their gods were turning against them even as Satan was ready to destroy them. Sadly, no one discerned the message. So it will be in the last days that Satan will work miracles and deceive the people into their doom.

The third plague of the lice was not able to be counterfeited. Is this because God did not allow them or was this because Satan was now handed more

direct control and there was no need to counterfeit the plague? The only other places that the Hebrew word for lice appears is in Psalms 105:31 where it recalls the event and then in Isaiah.

Isa 51:6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in *like manner*: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

The word *manner* is actually lice. They shall die like the time of the lice. The plague of lice was the warning of impending destruction and that Egypt would wax old like a garment so that those who dwelt therein would die. Was this Satan operating in his typical style like he did with Saul pronouncing his death to him before it came? When Caiaphas tore his robes and pronounced his death sentence, Christ was moving rapidly towards being cut off.

The fourth plague of flies was similar to the lice. The flies brought severe irritation and difficulty. As the Lord slowly stepped back and allowed Satan to take control, the plagues increased in intensity and severity. Christ was mocked, spat upon, his beard torn out, and beaten with rods. These events were like the buffeting of stinging flies that caused so much grief.

The fifth plague was on the cattle. We know how the Lord felt about the welfare of animals from the story of Jonah in Nineveh.

Jonah 4:11 And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?

So we know the Lord wanted to save the people of Nineveh and their animals. Would he not also want to save the Egyptians and their animals?

The fifth plague reveals the power of God turned into a serpent through the hands of Satan. Satan mocked the Egyptians with the worship of bulls and the

loss of their cattle would have struck terror to their hearts that this god also was powerless to help them. It also is a symbol of Christ our sacrifice.

Jer 11:19 But I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter; and I knew not that they had devised devices against me, saying, Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered.

Christ was compelled by Satan to carry the heavy wooden cross on his shoulder to his place of execution. Satan delights in killing animals and making them suffer. The slaughter of these animals would have caused our Saviour grief.

We know that Satan brought boils upon Job when he was allowed and this is what he did to the Egyptians in the sixth plague. How Christ must have suffered watching His dear children in agony through the boils and as He stood there in His leprous state, how much anguish He must have suffered in allowing Satan to do these things. The fact that the plagues had moved from the animals to boils on their bodies indicates that Satan had secured more control of the situation as he did with Job.

Job 2:3-7 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause. (4) And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. (5) But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. (6) And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life. (7) So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.

The boils manifested in the Egyptians may speak to the sufferings of Christ as he was nailed to His cross.

Not one word did Jesus answer to all this. While the nails were being driven through His hands, and the sweat drops of agony were forced

from His pores, from the pale, quivering lips of the innocent Sufferer a prayer of pardoning love was breathed for His murderers: “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” All heaven was gazing with profound interest upon the scene. The glorious Redeemer of a lost world was suffering the penalty of man’s transgression of the Father’s law. He was about to ransom His people with His own blood. He was paying the just claims of God’s holy law. This was the means through which an end was to be finally made of sin and Satan, and his host to be vanquished. {2T 208.2}

The suffering of the Egyptians was His suffering, their agony affected Him greatly and yet He continued to allow Satan to manifest this power because these people refused to heed the appeal to turn and be saved. As Jesus said to the Pharisees, How I wanted to gather you as a hen gathers her chicks but you would not!

First the fish died, then the frogs, then the cattle and now the boils on their very persons. Moses warned the Egyptians of each plague so they could take measures to turn away from the destroyer. They could turn from this biting serpent and look to the serpent upon the rod that is lifted up. In Christ being lifted up through this agony of the plagues, the serpent was exposed for who he is – the destroyer. Satan seeks to hide himself in the power of God and sends frogs to us to tell us it is God who does these things directly.

Their sufferings are often represented as a punishment visited upon them by the direct decree of God. It is thus that the great deceiver seeks to conceal his own work. GC 35

God warned the people to gather their animals and people and stay indoors. He wanted to save them from the destroyer. He knew exactly what Satan would do because He knew exactly how much of the elements He would allow Satan to control.

Exo 9:23 And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; and the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt.

When Moses lifted up the rod to heaven, it was a symbol of the Son of God lifted up upon the cross. Christ, the power of God, was given over to Satan to use according to his will. God allowed a breach in His protection and evil angels who delight in death and destruction hurled down these hail stones upon them. Remember what Psalms says:

Psa 78:47-49 **He destroyed their vines with hail**, and their sycamore trees with frost. (48) He gave up their cattle also to the hail, and their flocks to hot thunderbolts. (49) He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, **by sending evil angels among them.**

Notice it says that he “gave up” their cattle to the hail and the word *cast upon them* means to release or loose. We see the power of God given over to Satan and we stress the point that this can only be done through a torture and agony of Christ. Every time God allows Satan to destroy with His power, His Son is lifted up as it were upon the cross but Satan is revealed as the destroyer for those who are willing to discern it.

During the plague of the hail we observe this detail:

Exo 9:31 And the flax and the barley was smitten: for the barley was in the ear, and the flax was balled.

The barley was used for the first fruits offering. In the people killed by the hail the first fruits were also destroyed. The Scripture says

1 Cor 15:23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

The hail destroying the barley symbolises the battering of Christ the first fruits. (“we esteemed him smitten” Isa 53:4) The next plague involved locusts and we are told of the origin of locust plagues in Revelation

Rev 9:2-3 And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. (3) And there came

out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

This gives reference to the destroying power of Satan through his deceptions and this is what took place in this plague. Satan would leave absolutely no hope and would gnaw down and take away any green shoots of hope clinging to salvation. Satan was pressing Christ with the thoughts that all his work was in vain and that no one would appreciate it. He also had the fierce temptation that his Father would forsake Him.

Psa 22:16-18 For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. (17) I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. (18) They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

Mat 27:39-44 And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, (40) And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. (41) Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, (42) He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. (43) He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. (44) The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.

The ninth plague of darkness speaks directly to the horrors of Christ upon the cross as He was completely surrounded by demons. At this point Satan knew that he could accomplish the ruin of Egypt, this mighty land that had learned so much from Israel in the past and God had blessed so much. That sly grin that marks the face of the wicked one now emerges as he knows that Egypt is completely doomed. In that doom is revealed the sufferings of Christ upon the cross and His agony of loss in seeing His Egyptian children destroyed by Satan. Christ cries out in that darkness

Mat 27:46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Does the ninth hour correlate in some way to the ninth plague? In any case this moment was the darkest for Christ and for the Egyptians. They both were terror struck by what was about to fall upon them.

The final plague is the death of the first born and obviously this reveals the death of Christ through the 10 plagues. In their death is revealed His own. How Christ would have willingly died in their place but now they must face the destroyer. Yet again, for all those who placed the blood of the lamb on their doorposts, Satan would not be permitted to enter that house.

Exo 12:23 For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer **the destroyer** to come in unto your houses to smite you.

God withdraws His protection; He releases the evil angels to do their work as far as He permits and all the first born of Egypt die fore-shadowing the death of Christ. In the ten plagues of Egypt the cross of Christ is lifted high and reveals that the power of God is used in destruction but wrought by Satan. This destruction could only be done through the torture and suffering of Christ who was slain from the foundation of the world through every act of the destroyer heaped upon men. Satan's hatred for the image of God found in men causes him to kill them when and where ever he can.

“Cruelty is satanic. God is love; and all that He created was pure, holy, and lovely, until sin was brought in by the first great rebel. Satan himself is the enemy who tempts man to sin, and then destroys him if he can; and when he has made sure of his victim, then he exults in the ruin he has wrought. If permitted, he would sweep the entire race into his net. Were it not for the interposition of divine power, not one son or daughter of Adam would escape.” GC 534

How Satan exulted in the ruin of Egypt and the suffering that he caused Christ and the Father. The right hand of God was turned to leprosy and His sceptre became a serpent. If we can see through the slime of the frogs, the lies Satan tells of these plagues, we see the suffering of God and His Son, and the cross of Christ is lifted up, and in that lifting up we see the serpent for what he is –

a murderer and a liar from the beginning. (John 8:44). When we understand this truth then the saved of humanity can go home. The cross reveals to us the wickedness of Satan and the longsuffering of our God in allowing him to exercise his free choice at His own great expense.

Our perception of the plagues as God using force to compel Pharaoh to let Israel go reveals how callous is the human heart and how little is understood of the loving character of our Father in Heaven. God is not willing that any should perish but that all come to repentance and come into the protection of His Sabbath, His Commandments and Statutes.

Let us turn from our sins, and turn to Christ that He will not be crucified afresh in us by our sinful actions but rather that we will be crucified in Him and be raised to newness of life by the power of His resurrection. Can we see in the plagues the preaching of the Cross of Christ and His great suffering in allowing Satan to destroy the Egyptians? Do you see a tender picture of God that did all He could to save them? He called the Israelites to keep the Sabbath and a feast in order that He might hold off Satan a little longer and give them more time to repent.

“How deep the Father’s love for us. How vast beyond all measure. That He would give His only Son to make a wretch His treasure.”

Isa 55:8-9 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. (9) For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Is it now possible to see the cross of Christ in the plagues of Egypt? Do you need a little more evidence? Consider the fact that Christ is our ransom:

1 Tim 2:5-6 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; (6) **Who gave himself a ransom for all**, to be testified in due time.

Through whom was the ransom revealed for Israel?

Isa 43:3 For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I **gave Egypt for thy ransom**, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.

The 10 Plagues	The Cross of Christ
1. The serpent rod lifted up and the smiting of the water turning it to blood	The sweating of blood in the garden. His betrayal by Judas and men who came with staves to take him. Luke 22:44; Matt 26:49
2. The Frogs	Represents the lies that were told at the trial of Christ to secure his conviction Matt 26:60
3. The Lice	The sentence of death by Caiaphas. Isa 51:6 Matt 26:65
4. The Stinging Flies	The taunting words during his trial. The mocking and the spitting and insults heaped upon Christ. Matt 27:30
5. The Cattle	The bull represents the sacrificial animal going to its death. John 19:16; Matt 27:31
6. The Boils	The crucifixion of Christ. Matt 27:35, John 19:18
7. The Hail	The battering of the first fruits according to Ex 9:31; 1 Cor 15:23
8. The Locusts	The gnawing and stripping down of Christ – the green tree. The insults and mockery of Christ on the cross. Matt 27:39-44; Luke 23:31
9. The Darkness	Christ's darkest hours. From the 6 th to 9 th hour. Then "My God my God why have you forsaken me." Matt 27:45, 46
10. The Firstborn	The Firstborn is slain. Matt 27:50. Col 1:15-18

How did Egypt become a channel to ransom Israel? Christ was crucified in the Egyptians that the power of God might be made manifest on behalf of Israel to set them free.

Revelation 11:8 ...and **Egypt where also our Lord was crucified**

This indeed is the story of the cross! If we can grasp this process with Egypt then can we see the cross revealed in other Old Testament stories?

Through the grace of Christ it is my prayer that we can see that indeed Christ is the lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Let us behold *this* lamb and live.

Calvary in Egypt

When Christ requested His Father to glorify His name, the Father replied that He had glorified it and He will glorify it again. When God spoke, some thought it had thundered and yet others thought it was an angel speaking to Christ.

When we ponder the subject of the plagues of Egypt many say that it thundered, but in the light of the gospel there is a sweet angelic voice preaching to us the cross of Christ. The gospel was preached to Israel as well as to us. Heb 4:2

Through His work of mediation, Christ had long pleaded for the people of Egypt. He stood in the ever widening gap of apostasy until finally the demands of the destroyer had to be granted. In the sorrowful slaughter of Egypt we hear echoes of the Saviour's footsteps towards the cross. In the lifting up of the serpent rod the character of the destroyer was revealed as was also the selfless love of God and His Son. Truly, all men are drawn to Christ in this light.

Look beyond the thunder, the hail and blood and see herein a portrait of the suffering Son of God wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities.