

“Throw Down”

Sermon Reflection Questions June 28, 2009

Exodus 5-12, Unlocking the Old Testament

One of the challenging episodes in the Old Testament is when God uses Moses to go head to head with Pharaoh. Last week we saw God call Moses to this awesome task of leading people out of captivity in Egypt. This week we get to see how this task gets carried out. We see God take off the gloves as He interacts with Pharaoh by bring about various plagues and even going as far as hardening Pharaoh’s heart.

1. Read over Exodus chapter 5-12 to get an understanding as to how the story unfolds.
 - a. What in this text raises questions for you?
 - b. What in this text is difficult to understand?
 - c. What does this text reveal about the nature of God?

2. One of the first things that I notice is that Moses’ first attempt to get Pharaoh to set the people free ends up back firing and actually makes life harder on the people. (Ex 5:1-21)
 - a. Summarize in your own words what happened during and after Moses’ interaction with Pharaoh?
 - a. If God sent Moses to talk to Pharaoh, then why didn’t things work out well?
 - b. What was the Israelites’ response toward Moses and Aaron as a result of their interaction with Pharaoh? (Ex 5:17-21)

3. Pharaoh’s magicians were able to perform many of the same miracles that God performed through Moses. (See for example Exodus 7:8-12, 22-25)
 - a. Which miracles were they able and not able to perform?
 - b. Why were they able to perform some of the same miracles?
 - c. What was their response when there were miracles that they could not perform? (see Exodus 8:18-19)

4. There are two very challenging elements in this story. The first is “Why would God harden Pharaoh’s heart?” You would think He would want to soften it so that Pharaoh would be more likely to let the Israelites go. How would you respond to this question? (See Romans 9:17 and Exodus 9:12-17)

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5. The other difficult question and perhaps the most difficult is, “Why would God kill the first born in Egypt?” Are there not innocent civilians in this fight between Pharaoh and God?” (See Exodus 11) How would you respond to this question?

6. In the message, I explained how God’s action of bringing about the plagues was an assault to the pagan gods (including Pharaoh). What can you remember from the message about how God’s actions were an assault on these pagan gods?

7. The main point of the message was to say that God will wage war on our “pagan” gods and “idols”.
 - a. What are the “pagan” gods or idols that people tend to worship?

 - b. What “pagan” gods or idols do you tend to worship?

 - c. What does this passage tell us about the way that God will deal with those false gods and idols in our lives?