

Opportunity To Turn

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Preacher: Rev Andrew Coghill

- [0 : 0 0] Now as we continue our progress through this section of the book of Exodus, we come to this chapter 9 where we find the fifth plague about to take place. We've had, if you recollect, the plague of blood, the plague of frogs, the plague of lice and the plague of flies.
- And we've had Pharaoh hardening his heart or having it hardened by the Lord or simply it being hardened. And this continues as the story unfolds. We notice in this verse 1 that it says, Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me.
- This of course is perhaps the four words which we most associate with the book of Exodus and with the commission of Moses in Egypt. And it is so expressive of the Lord's simple demand to free his people from the power of oppression.
- Now this call, this demand is in fact enunciated seven times in the book of Exodus. There are these early chapters of the book of Exodus.
- And as we know, or perhaps know from other places in time, seven of course is the number of divine perfection. So it won't be an accident that it is seven times altogether.
- [1 : 1 3] For those who are interested in following through on these things, this is the fifth occasion when it is used. The first occasion is chapter 5 at verse 1. Secondly, at chapter 7, verse 16.
- Then in chapter 8 at verse 1. Then in chapter 8 at verse 20. Then we have chapter 9, verse 1 here. Then at verse 13 later on in the passage we read.
- And the final location is chapter 3 at verse 10. And as you will see, not only does the number of times, the intensity, the frequency of this demand accelerate and increase in intensity as the chapters unfold.
- And so the pounding away is a hammering of God's demands upon the heart. The Pharaoh continues and increases. But also there comes a point, as we will see in due course, chapter 10 at verse 3, when the demand simply ceases to be made.
- God no longer says, let my people go. He's thereafter saying, they're going, whether you like it or not. Each of us is invited to cooperate with the Lord in the unfolding of His will.
- [2 : 2 5] Each of us is invited, called, demanded by the Lord that such power as He has placed in our hands, we will use to fulfill His purposes.
- He makes His call. He gives His commands. In this instance it is to Pharaoh, let my people go. To each of us it may be to exercise our influence or power or some kind of usage of the influence or abilities the Lord has placed in our hands to do something that will further the cause of His kingdom or the blessing upon His people.
- We are called to exercise that which the Lord has placed into our hands. But His kingdom will continue its onward progress with or without us.
- There comes the point when the Lord has said, let my people go for the final time. And they're still going, even though Pharaoh does not participate or cooperate in that demand.

And the Lord will fulfill His purposes with or without us, whom He invites to cooperate with His purposes. To exercise such influence, ability or power as He has placed in our hands to further and to progress His kingdom.

- [3 : 44] Whether for the benefit of others or whether for the furtherance and help of the gospel or whatever it may be. He has put some little power, some little ability, some little opportunity to enrich, to further, to help forward the cause of His kingdom.

And He asks it of us. And He will ask again and again and again and again until we agree, until we cooperate.

Or until we are silenced at the last because we will not cooperate. There comes a point when the Lord asks for the final time and then fulfills His will without us.

My spirit shall not always strive with man, says the Lord. But here we have the fifth out of seven occasions. Let my people go. Why? That they may serve me.

But if thou refuse to let them go and withhold them still, behold the hand of the Lord is upon thy cattle which is in the field. Now of course cattle doesn't just mean cows. It means as it spells out here, livestock.

- [4 : 49] Livestock in general. Upon the horses, upon the asses, the camels, the oxen, the sheep, there shall be a very grievous moraine. Now moraine makes it sound like something coming down from the sky.

In fact it simply means an infectious disease which affects the livestock but for whatever reason does not affect human beings. So we have the plague upon the cattle in the generic sense.

Now of course we have seen how each of the plagues has a particular, we might say has a particular god, false god, small g of the Egyptians in mind.

But it is entirely possible, though not certain of course, that the one in view here is the god Hathor or Hathor who is depicted in Egyptian art with the head of a cow.

And of course many of the Egyptian gods were depicted with the body of a human being with the head of a different kind of creature. So the threat of the loss of their livestock, now it's debatable, it's possible.

- [5 : 48] Verse 3 which it says, thy cattle which is in the field. Does this mean that those that happen to be in buyers or under shelter were safe, were protected?

Clearly not every single beast in Egypt dies because, you know, otherwise what are the livestock they're bringing under shelter when it comes to the plague of hail and fire?

So it's not every single one. So some commentators have speculated that this is verse 3 which is in the field. It means to be those which are outside. And those that might be perhaps as yet undercover or under shelter are protected or for whatever reason do not die.

But either way, the livestock or the loss of their livestock would be a huge, massive cost to their owners. The Egyptians had, remember, made the Israelites poor.

They had made them slaves and now the Lord will make them. The Egyptians poor, though at this stage they're not starving and there's nothing as yet that has afflicted them personally in their bodies.

- [6 : 52] They're not being struck down. It just takes away their wealth. It would paralyze their whole economy. If you think about it, how much the economies of those days would depend upon beasts.

Whether it is donkeys to transport goods about horses for chariots or for military or for any kind of likewise transport or oxen pulling plows or sheep or wool or for meat or whatever it might be.

Goats likewise. Camels for transportation across the desert and goodness knows all for it. If you take away all these beasts, it's difficult for us in our modern mechanised age to think in terms of the sheer paralysis that would have affected the Egyptian state and economy with the loss of all these beasts.

It's not just a loss of wealth. It's a complete paralysis of the whole infrastructure of the country. The neatest thing would be, I think perhaps in our day and age, if the Lord was to say, I'm going to send a plague on Scotland.

And the effect of this plague is that I'm going to cause all the petrol and oil in the country simply to evaporate. So that everybody's tanks will suddenly be dry.

[8 : 04] There will be no oil in your boilers. There will be nothing in your tanks. There will be nothing in your vehicles. And all your big powerful lorries and cars and ambulances and police cars and helicopters and everything that you have.

There are just going to be so much hunk of junk. There is not going to be of any use to anybody because nothing will start. There is no petrol, no oil, nothing. Now if you take that all, just that one ingredient, all the petrol, all the oil, out of the economy, out of all the vehicles, they become literally just hunks of metal.

There are no use to anything. You can't do a thing. You think about how much of our country, how much of our economy depends on mechanised transport. Depends upon emergency vehicles.

Depends upon ordinary cars. Depends upon the delivery of your oil, of your food, of everything that you get. And suddenly none of it's possible. Some people, of course, might have the odd horse to spare, but we're not a horse-based economy anymore, a horse-based society.

So there's going to be almost no means of transporting or moving about anything beyond what people could carry themselves. It would paralysse our entire country.

[9 : 17] Now something of that is what we can imagine what would happen to Egypt. Suddenly all the beasts, whether for food or for transport or whatever, or those in the fields, not literally every single one, but they die of this marine, this infectious disease which affects them.

They are impoverished. They are completely paralysed by it. And indeed the very time of this is fixed. God takes note of cattle.

You know, the hand of God is to be acknowledged even in the sickness and death of cattle, of livestock. Jesus says, not one sparrow falls to the ground without your father. And likewise, we read in Psalm 36, verse 6, that thy righteousness is like the great mountains.

Thy judgments are great deep. O Lord, thou preservest man and beast. God withdraws his preservation on man or beast. They die.

They perish. It is by the grace of God we draw every breath. It is by the grace of God our heart continues to be. God preserves man and beast. And if he just withdraws that preservation, then everything dies.

[10 : 28] So the point and the time is fixed. Verse 5. Tomorrow the Lord shall do this thing in the land. Tomorrow it shall be done. We don't know what a day will bring forth. We can't say what shall be on the model.

But it is not so with God. We can't predict what tomorrow will bring. But he can. He knows exactly all the past, present and future is in the palm of his hand. He is an eternal God.

And the applicability, the aptness of this judgment is found in the extent to which the Egyptians venerated the more useful of their animals.

The ox, the cow, the ram and so on. In all parts of the country, temples and shrines were built. And divine honors were paid to these domesticated beasts.

Or at least perhaps to the gods who represented them. And while the pestilence caused a great loss in money, it also, of course, struck a heavy blow at their paganism and their superstition and all the false gods that they worshipped.

[11 : 31] The Egyptians then worshipped their cattle. Remember, we shouldn't forget that it is from the Egyptians that the Israelites learned to make a golden calf.

You know, what made them suddenly come up with a golden calf for worship? Because that's what they had seen in Egypt. That's the kind of gods that the Egyptians had worshipped. That's what they've been surrounded by for 400 years.

It's from the Egyptians they learned their idolatry. And they learned their paganism. And they learned about the golden calf. This plague there is particularly apt.

Now, whatever we make an idol of, it is just for God to remove or to embitter us against it. Now, this particular plague, you see at verse 4 and at verse 7, this is one of those from which the Israelites are explicitly exempt.

Yet, the Lord shall sever, verse 4, between the cattle of Israel and the cattle of Egypt. And there shall nothing die of all that is the children of Israel. And at verse 7, Pharaoh sent.

[12 : 31] And behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened. And he did not let the people go. So, we have to recognize what is happening here.

The paralysis of the entire Egyptian state and economy. Think in terms of suddenly oil, all the petrol or oil in our entire land simply evaporating.

It was nearly the tanks of all our vehicles and suddenly they're empty. Suddenly all the boilers are empty. Suddenly all the oil tanks are empty. Everything just vanished. It's just evaporated. The Lord has caused it to disappear.

And how paralyzed we become as a nation, as a people. That's the life of what's happening here to Egypt. Now, of course, as we said, it's not literally every single beast.

Because although we read in verse 6, you know, all the cattle of Egypt died. But of the cattle of the children of Israel died, not one. This is not intended as a literal description.

[13 : 28] You might say, oh, well, the Bible's not telling the truth. Yes, it is. This is a literary device. In the same way as when people might say to you, how often have you been in the Tarver? You might say, oh, I've been in hundreds of times.

Now, do you mean literally I've been more than 201 times but less than 999 times? Or is it simply a figure of speech? Well, you say, I've done that hundreds of times.

I've done that loads of times. You know, it's simply a figure of speech. And this particular figure of speech is called synecdoche. I won't try and spell it for you. It's quite a complicated sort of word to spell.

But it is a literary device which means that part is, all is described when only part is meant. And just to give you an example of that, a good example of that, I think, would be in Matthew chapter 3, verse 5, where we read, Then went out to him, that is to John the Baptist, Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about John.

And nobody reads that and thinks that every single person in Judea was there on the banks of the Jordan listening to John the Baptist. They do not imagine that when they were to trek through all Judea and all the different times, that it would be a ghost town.

[14 : 41] That it would be absolutely deserted. Because every single soul in the whole of Judea is there at the Jordan listening to John the Baptist. No, it's a synecdoche.

It is a device whereby the whole is described, when in fact the part, or a significant part, is meant. So, when it says all the cattle of Egypt died, it doesn't mean every single week.

It means that the infection affected all of the cattle, and a great many died. And clearly not all died, because when we later on have the plague of hail and fire, there have to be some that are being brought undercover there.

So, it's possible, as we go back to verse 3, that what is meant is simply those that were out in the open, of which that was most of them, may have died. Which is in the field, perhaps.

But either way, it's not every single one. So, the plague of cattle is severe enough. The Israelites are exempt. But then we have the next thing, which is the plague of boils.

[15 : 45] And that, again, is, if you like, a slap in the face to ISIS. We think of ISIS, we think of the terrorist organization in the Middle East. But ISIS originally is the Egyptian goddess of medicine and peace.

And clearly, she is helpless to protect her people against the hand of God. Because these boils that break out now, and the blames that follow, the sores and wounds that come with it, these affect everybody.

And we have, it's not unreasonable to suppose that this particular plague would also affect the Israelites too. Because we are not told explicitly that they are exempt from this one.

But rather, verse 9, we read throughout, blames upon man upon beast throughout all the land of Egypt. Now, of course, it's possible that Pharaoh himself is miraculously kept exempt from these blames and boils.

Because he's still in the position to argue with Moses and Aaron and so on. Perhaps the Lord preserves him, keeps him, and in the same sense raises him up so that he can be struck down later.

[16 : 52] Certainly the magicians are affected by it. Verse 11, they could not stand before Moses because of the boils. It affects them. They are wounded by it.

These sores, these boils and blames that break out on them, it prevents them from being able to do anything. Not simply because of the pain or discomfort, but also because by these boils, they become ritually unclean.

Cleanliness was a big deal to the Egyptians. They liked to be clean. They liked to be, you know, neat and tidy. You remember how when Joseph was brought out of the dungeon after at least two, three years there, it says how they shaved him.

And by implication, they would have washed him as well, you know, before he stood before Pharaoh. Cleanliness was a big deal to the Egyptians. And ritual purity would be highly significant also in the worship of their false gods.

So the magicians, the astrologers and so on, they could not practice even the rituals of their spells and divinations in that unclean state.

[17 : 59] And although they had been sent for, obviously, by Pharaoh, they could not stand. They are suffering in their own bodies. They are ritually unclean.

Whereas, obviously, Moses and Aaron, I think we must take it, are not affected by it. The Israelites may or may not be affected. But we notice also here a certain poetic justice or divine justice in the way this plague is meted out.

The Lord said unto Moses in Aaron, verse 8, Take to you handfuls of ashes of the furnace. Now, what's meant by furnace? The Hebrew literary means brick kiln.

Now, you remember how it is bricks that the Israelites were commanded to make, then bricks without straw. So the brick kilns will have fallen cold in these days of the plague.

The economy is not functioning. Society is not functioning as it was only a couple of weeks ago at this stage. Because everything has ground to a halt. They've had these devastating plagues.

[19 : 00] Everybody was busy digging for water when the river was all blood. Then they had all the frogs. Nobody could do a thing. Then the lice was everywhere. Then the flies were getting at them everywhere.

And now, then they've got this plague upon their cattle and all their livestock. Everything's dead. Or virtually everything. A lot of things are dead. So the brick kilns are just not functioning.

So the ashes are cold. And he takes the ashes out of the brick kiln. This symbol of oppression of the Israelites. Takes them in before Pharaoh and throws them into the air.

And the Lord's wind carries it throughout all the land of Egypt. Some commentators say it would become a hot, burning dust. Which descending upon all the people of Egypt then brings out these boils and these blames and so on.

As we've said, it is possible, perhaps likely, that the Israelites may have been affected by this too. But at any rate, the magicians are unable to stand.

[19 : 59] They have no defence. That which the Lord gives to his people, regardless of what affliction comes against them. Regardless of what attacks may come upon them.

Remember, when we think about being able to stand. Remember what it says in Ephesians chapter 6 and verse 13. Wherefore, take unto you the whole armour of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day.

And having done all to stand. Now it doesn't say or specify what that evil day may be. That evil day may be disease. Which we didn't look for.

It may be illness or suffering or difficulties. And remember that Christians are not immune from these things. Any more than I would suggest to you that Israelites were immune from the plague of waters.

But having done all. When we have done all before the Lord. When we have set our lives, our hearts to serve. And we are clothed in the armour of God. We may be battered by the battle.

[20 : 59] Indeed, you don't put on armour of God simply for purely ceremonial parade. It is rather to expect a battle. To expect a struggle and suffering and the attacks of the evil one.

Having done all to stand. This is what the magicians and the false priests and gods of Pharaoh could not do. They could not stand before Moses.

They were so afflicted. They were so rendered unclean. They were so in pain. They simply could not stand. Friends, the Christian in his or her life will have pain.

There will be struggles. There will be difficulties. There may even be times when we think the Lord has abandoned us. And in the heat of battle, we may wonder where our commander has gone. But he has equipped and clothed his people in the armour of God for a purpose.

That when the attacks of the enemy come, we are able to stand. It doesn't mean you won't be wounded. It doesn't mean you won't be hammered at times.

[22 : 03] But having done all, still to stand. Sometimes we may think perhaps of a fighter in a room. A boxer or whatever. Or somebody like that. Who's taken a pound.

And perhaps he's given some punches as well as taking some. But he's not out. If he can stagger back up to his feet and he's still standing and ready to take on his opponent.

And his opponent may put him down again and again and again. But if he can keep getting up and stand until the bell. He is not yet beaten. Whatever the judges may pronounce about points.

Whatever they may decide who looks the better fighter. He keeps getting up. He keeps being able to stand. Then having done all. Clothed in the armour of God.

We will be able to stand. Not because I see it. But because it is God's promise. And because it is God's word. As we said, the brick kiln was one of the principal instruments of oppression.

[23 : 00] Of the Israelites. So it becomes a source of chastisement now. Upon the Egyptians. As is often the case with our sins. You know, we see. They see the way that God makes the punishment for the crime.

We see that so often the particular chastisements we are under. If we are honest. And humble enough to do so. We can trace back quite often. The chastisements that we are under.

To the particular choices we have made. To the particular sins we know. If we are honest. We are guilty of. The goodness and severity of God. His punishments.

His chastisements. Are always proportionate. They are always appropriate. They are always right. And perfectly balanced.

God's desire with chastisement. Is not the destruction. Of anything. But rather the teaching. The reclaiming. And ultimately. The blessing.

[23 : 57] Of those who he would bring. Back into his fold. Or back into line. So the plague of boils. Follows heart. Upon the plague. Upon the capital. There is no further.

Sort of plea. At this stage. No more. Let my people go. No more turning. And repentance. By Pharaoh. At this stage. But having had the plague of boils. Which the Lord continues.

To harden the heart of Pharaoh. Verse 12. He hearkened not unto them. As the Lord had spoken unto Moses. The Lord said unto Moses. Rise up early in the morning. Verse 13.

And stand before Pharaoh. And say unto him. Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews. The sixth time now. Let my people go. That they may serve me. This is the second last occasion.

It's coming near the end now. Of Pharaoh's opportunities. And yet. This isn't the final plague. By any means. This is only the seventh. Out of ten.

[24 : 53] And yet. It's the second last time. That the Lord actually says. Let my people go. And what is coming now. Is the plague of hail and fire. And what we understand.

By this. Probably. Is not. It's sort of like meteors. Falling from the sky. In a sort of fiery rain. But rather. It's hail. In the ordinary sense. Perhaps.

But also. Storms. And lightning. If you're going to have hail. Which is essentially. Hard little balls of ice. Then you're going to have to have. Like thunder. And lightning.

With it too. Certainly in a land like Egypt. Where thunderstorms. Were not unknown. But they were rare. Hail was. Not unknown. But it tended to be.

A very small size. And it wasn't a great force. So I mean. They hadn't had it never. But having it. It's such a season. As this. Which is almost certainly. Thought to be. You know.

[25 : 45] January to April. Because that's when they put out. Their cattle and their beasts. To graze. Because it was the best. Opportunity. For pasturage. So we have this. Plague of hail and fire.

Coming at this. Particular time. Now again. A particular. Egyptian goddess. And you here. Would be the goddess. Nut. And she was the goddess. Of the sky.

And this. Particular. Plague is coming. Down from the sky. The plague of hail. And fire. And it is going to affect. Everybody. Not the Israelites.

This is another. Explicit exemption. As we see. Verse 22. And verse 26. There will be. That he will cause it. To rain down.

Toward heaven. Throughout all the land of Egypt. Despite verse 22. We read at verse 26. Which we didn't go as far as that. Tonight. Only in the land of Goshen. Where the children of Israel were. Was there no hail.

[26 : 40] So the Lord is making. A distinction again. But on this occasion. He's not just making. A distinction. Between Israelites. And Egyptians. But rather. He is giving. Not only a warning.

As to when this will be. A particular prediction. Of the plague. But there is also. Gracious. Advice. To Pharaoh.

And to his servants. He is giving them. Opportunity. To be spared. The worst effects. Of this particular plague. He is distinguishing.

In other words. Not just between Israelites. And Egyptians. But between those Egyptians. Who will heed. His word. And those who will. Ignore it. Send. For their servants. And cattle.

Out of the field. That they might be sheltered. Thus. Clearly. We must understand. That whatever. The severity. Of the hail. Which clearly.

[27 : 34] Was able to inflict. Fatal injuries. And if we think. Of it. You know. Oh. Surely. We need to be great. Big bowlers. To do that. No. It wouldn't. You think. Of how people.

Are killed. With a bullet. A bullet. Is a tiny. Little thing. A tiny. Little. It might be. Sort of torpedo shaped. Or pointy shaped. Nowadays. In the olden days. It would have been a round ball.

A round ball of lead. If that hits you. And hits you. Hard enough. And fast enough. It will kill you. And if this stuff. Is coming down. From the sky. In showers. Whatever be.

The hardness. Of these little balls. Of ice. Of perhaps. Of stone. Or whatever. The Lord is using. And the lightning. Is coming with it. And as it strikes. The ground. Or the trees. Repeatedly.

The fire. Runs along the ground. There is nowhere. To escape this. Unless you are already. Under cover. But despite. The severity. Of this plague.

[28 : 29] Of hail and fire. Clearly. The roof. Of a buyer. Or the roof. Of an ordinary house. Is sufficient. To shelter you.

From it. Because this is what the Lord. Advises. And encourages. The roof. Of a humble buyer. Or an ordinary home. Is sufficient protection.

Because the test. Is not the strength. Of one's roof. But rather. The extent. Of one's willingness. To obey. I'll say that again.

The test. With this plague. Is not the strength. Of one's roof. But rather. The extent. Of one's willingness. To obey. Because if we will flee.

For shelter. We will be spared. Whether we are Egyptian. Or whether we are Israelites. Hebrews. Remember. We read in chapter 2. Verses 2 and 3. If the word spoken. By angels.

[29 : 25] Was steadfast. And every transgression. And disobedience. Received a just recompense. To reward. How shall we escape. If we neglect.

So great salvation. Which at the first. Began to be spoken. By the Lord. And was confirmed. Unto us by them. That heard him. How will anybody.

Egyptian. Or whoever they may be. Out in the midst. Of such a storm. Out in the midst. Of such a plague. Of hail and fire. How will they be sheltered? How will they escape? If they neglect.

All the warnings. If they neglect. Such a salvation. Which has been uttered. The advice. The encouragement. The Lord has given. Save yourselves. Get under cover. Before this plague.

Comes. Before it strikes. Because the Lord. Gives due warning. This is what he does. This is what he says. You know. Tomorrow. He's going to send. Send therefore now.

[30 : 23] Gather thy cattle. And all that thou hast. In the field. For upon every man. And beast. Which shall be found. In the field. That shall not be brought home. The hail. Shall come down upon them. And they shall die.

He that feared. The word of the Lord. Among the servants of Pharaoh. Made his servants. And his cattle. Free into the houses. And he that regarded. Not the word of the Lord. Left his servants. And his cattle.

In the field. Verse 18. Be bold. Tomorrow. About this time. I will cause it to rain. A very grievous hail. Such as have not been in Egypt. Since the foundation.

At all. Even until now. Now when God's justice. Threatens. Ruin. Upon us. And upon.

Any individual. Or any nation. His mercy. At the same time. Shows us. A way. Of escape. From it. Remember what Paul writes. About temptation.

[31 : 16] I think it's 1 Corinthians. Chapter 10. Where he says. You know. There's no temptation. That's taking you. But such as is coming to man. And the Lord will not leave you. In that state. But he will.

In every case. Make a means. A way. Of escape. That you might be able to bear it. And the Egyptians. Have a way of escape. They've got a means. Of escaping this plague.

Of hail and fire. They can shelter in their homes. Bring their beasts. Bring their servants. Bring everybody. Under cover. They've been hit so far. They've been hit so far. With six plagues.

When does their message. Get home. This isn't going to stop. Until the Lord is finally obeyed. And I don't doubt. That humanly speaking. Each time.

Pharaoh perhaps thought. Well surely. That's all he's got. You know. In his pocket now. That he must have exhausted. All the tricks he's got up his sleeve. That must be it. If I just hold fast now.

[32 : 11] If I just harden my heart once more. He can't have anything left. I mean. That must have been coincidence. Something done now. He must somehow. Have been able. Just to see what was coming anyway. This can't possibly be.

Of the Lord. Wave upon wave. Upon wave. Of plagues. Well. The Lord sent plagues. Ten plagues on Egypt. He could have sent a hundred. He could have sent a thousand.

But ten was sufficient. Ten was his perfect purpose. But he gives warning. And he gives opportunity. Of escape. Escape. So when God's justice threatens ruin.

His mercy at the same time. Shows us a way of escape. From it. So unwilling. Is the Lord. That any should perish unnecessarily.

The Lord does not take pleasure. In the death of any sinner. He desires. That they should turn and be saved. He desires. That they should have shelter.

[33 : 08] He desires. That they should be spared. But there is only one means. Of shelter. And that is an obedience. To the Lord's command. For the Egyptians. It's to get undercover.

For us. It is to get undercover. Of the blood of Christ. Because when the plagues. Of God. And his final judgments. Fall. As undoubtedly. They will.

There is no. Man made shelter. That is going to spare us. It is only the shelter. Of the blood of Christ. The distinction. In this particular plague.

Now. Is not simply. As we said. Between Israelites. And Egyptians. Between some. But rather. Between some Egyptians. And others. Those who are prepared. To fear the Lord. And obey him.

And those who will not. The cattle. We talked about. The synecdoche. The four of how. Not all. Not every last beast. In Egypt. Was dead. Appeared to have.

[34 : 04] As we said. An out to greatest. January. To April. This sort of time. And that would tie in. With the time of the Passover. Probably early April. Which is coming up. Of course. In the subsequent chapters.

When pasturage. Was easiest to come by. But the storm. Coming at that particular. Time of year. Would not only strike. Universal terror.

Into the minds. Of the people. But would occasion. The destruction. Of all those people. And cattle. Human beings. As well as livestock. Who neglected.

The warning. And remained. Outside of shelter. As we said before. It's not about the strength. Of your roof. It is about the extent. Of your willingness.

To obey. So likewise. In Egypt. The hailstones. Are coming down. The force. That is able. To kill. But. What is the ultimate. Message here.

[34 : 59] We read in Hebrews. Chapter 6. In the second part. Of verse 18. That we might have. A strong. Consolation. Who have fled.

For refuge. That is shelter. To lay hold. Upon the hope. Set before us. Which hope. We have. As an anchor. Of the soul. Both sure.

And steadfast. What is. Our defense. What is. Our protection. What is our refuge. Psalm 46. Tell us. God. Is our refuge.

And strength. A very present. Help. In trouble. Now. We read these words. And we think. Oh yeah. That's the typical words. Of scripture. We know them. In practice.

But do we. Do we actually hear. And read what they're saying. A very present. That means right here. Right now. Help in trouble. See. Trouble is all around us. Nobody gets a free ride.

[35 : 52] There's always anxiety. There's always concern. Even when things seem to be going. Swimming week. And when we think. We look at other people's lives. We think. I wish I was like him. I wish I was like her.

Everything goes smoothly for them. Everything goes well for them. If you could just see it in their lives. If you could just see it in their minds. And their hearts. You'd see all the trouble we have. All the anxieties.

All the fears. There is trouble all around us. God is our refuge and strength. Our very present. Help. Right here. Right now. Help in trouble.

Therefore will not be fear. Though the earth be removed. Though the mountains be carried. Into the midst of the sea. Though the waters thereof. Roar and be troubled. Though the mountains shake.

With the swelling thereof. Say. All the powers of nature be shaken. God. Is our refuge and strength. Christ. Is our mates of salvation.

[36 : 46] If we neglect. So great a salvation. There is no other shelter for us. Now. It's not for nothing. That we stop our reading. In verse 21. Because the plague of hail and fire.

Has been promised. It has been predicted. And it is only a day away. Moses said. I don't know about this time. Everyone who fear the word of the Lord. They're getting their beast.

Their cattle. Their servants undercover. But it hasn't fallen yet. But it is promised. And like all the other plagues. That have come inexorably. This one will come too.

And the others. Now. The Lord's judgment. Has not fallen yet. Upon us. But it is promised. And God does not make promises in vain.

He has promised. How this world is going to end. He has predicted. And prophesied. In Peter. And in Revelation. And so on. What the end of this world is going to be. We may not still be around.

[37 : 42] When the end of the world comes. But our end will have come. And we will face a judgment. We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. What is the shelter? What is the refuge?

God is our refuge. And strength. The very present health. Right here. Right now. If we will have him. There is none other. Because that judgment.

Which falls upon the earth. Upon the world. Upon all the souls. And the creatures within it. Will take everything. Just as the flood did in the days of Noah. Except those who are within the ark.

And except those who are covered by the blood. And shelter. By the perfect sacrifice of Christ. There is nothing. There is no help. There is no protection. But there is protection in him.

God is. And refuge. And strength. And there is warning. And there is opportunity. And there is grace. To be saved.

[38 : 41] To be protected. He that feared the word of the Lord. Among the servants of Pharaoh. May his servants and his cattle flee to the houses. And he that regarded not the word of the Lord.

Left his servants and his cattle in the field. Which one of you? Where are you leaving your servanthood? Where are you leaving your wealth? Your cattle? Your soul?

Out in the field? Or under shelter and cover of the blood? This is the warning the Lord gives us. And we have stopped. When it is half way to being fulfilled. We have stopped our reading.

When the warning has been given. When the word has been pronounced. But it has not yet been fulfilled. Because that is where we find ourselves. At this stage upon mercy's ground.

God has given his promise. But as yet. He has held off. Not because he can't fulfill it. But because he desires to give us time. And opportunity. And mercy.

[39 : 39] Such is the God of great grace. That invites us to repent. To believe. And to be saved. Let's pray.