

Friday, April 3 ~ We Can Do This Easy or We Can Do This Hard! ~ Exodus 9:13-35

I'm sure you've seen the William H. Hunt painting from the late 19th century entitled, "The Light of the World." It shows Jesus standing beside a cottage door - a door with no handle, overgrown with weeds and thorns. Jesus holds a celestial lantern in one hand as He gently knocks on the door with the other. Loved and tattered replicas of the painting are seen in houses of every sort, from cabin to castle, because everyone recognizes that our Savior knocks on every heart's door. Every heart must have a chance to hear.

In Egypt, in the days of Pharaoh, God Almighty reached out His hand and pounded upon the mighty gates of the cruel and pagan nation who had enslaved His children - children He would lift into His chosen people. In Exodus 9:18, God mercifully warned of yet another plague, hail, and told the Egyptians to seek shelter. In verse 20, those who saw the signs and heard the warnings feared the true God and lived. Many perished, but that was not God's will.

Christ knocks, gently and persistently. Perhaps someday that gentle knock will come as a torrent. But what seems as a plague may, in fact, contain mercy directed to every heart, that we may gain life eternal. His perfecting will be done, "one way or the other."

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Exodus 9:13-35 New International Version (NIV)

The Plague of Hail

¹³Then the LORD said to Moses, "Get up early in the morning, confront Pharaoh and say to him, 'This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me, ¹⁴or this time I will send the full force of my plagues against you and against your officials and your people, so you may know that there is no one like me in all the earth. ¹⁵For by now I could have stretched out my hand and struck you and your people with a plague that would have wiped you off the earth. ¹⁶But I have raised you up^[a] for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth. ¹⁷You still set yourself against my people and will not let them go. ¹⁸Therefore, at this time tomorrow I will send the worst hailstorm that has ever fallen on Egypt, from the day it was founded till now. ¹⁹Give an order now to

bring your livestock and everything you have in the field to a place of shelter, because the hail will fall on every person and animal that has not been brought in and is still out in the field, and they will die.”

²⁰Those officials of Pharaoh who feared the word of the LORD hurried to bring their slaves and their livestock inside. ²¹But those who ignored the word of the LORD left their slaves and livestock in the field.

²²Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward the sky so that hail will fall all over Egypt—on people and animals and on everything growing in the fields of Egypt.” ²³When Moses stretched out his staff toward the sky, the LORD sent thunder and hail, and lightning flashed down to the ground. So the LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt; ²⁴hail fell and lightning flashed back and forth. It was the worst storm in all the land of Egypt since it had become a nation. ²⁵Throughout Egypt hail struck everything in the fields—both people and animals; it beat down everything growing in the fields and stripped every tree. ²⁶The only place it did not hail was the land of Goshen, where the Israelites were.

²⁷Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron. “This time I have sinned,” he said to them. “The LORD is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong. ²⁸Pray to the LORD, for we have had enough thunder and hail. I will let you go; you don’t have to stay any longer.”

²⁹Moses replied, “When I have gone out of the city, I will spread out my hands in prayer to the LORD. The thunder will stop and there will be no more hail, so you may know that the earth is the LORD’S. ³⁰But I know that you and your officials still do not fear the LORD God.”

³¹(The flax and barley were destroyed, since the barley had headed and the flax was in bloom. ³²The wheat and spelt, however, were not destroyed, because they ripen later.)

³³Then Moses left Pharaoh and went out of the city. He spread out his hands toward the LORD; the thunder and hail stopped, and the rain no longer poured down on the land. ³⁴When Pharaoh saw that the rain and hail and thunder had stopped, he sinned again: He and his officials hardened their hearts. ³⁵So Pharaoh’s heart was hard and he would not let the Israelites go, just as the LORD had said through Moses.

Footnotes:

- a. **Exodus 9:16** Or *have spared you*