

Exodus 9:13-10:29 'That My Name May Be Proclaimed in All the Earth': March 5, 2017
Psalm 78 The Plagues of Egypt, Part II
Romans 9

While the hardening of Pharaoh's heart may be one of the most famous examples in the Bible,
the language of hard hearts is more commonly used of Israel.

We used Psalm 95 as the call to worship –
where God warns Israel *not* to harden their hearts as in the rebellion.
The same picture is used in Psalm 78,
where the Psalmist recounts the plagues of Egypt –
and how the people of Israel saw these great plagues,
and yet that did not prevent them from turning aside themselves.

So let's sing a portion of Psalm 78.
It's a long Psalm – so we'll just sing the first four stanzas,
and then jump down to stanzas 17-21.
It also connects us well to Joel's sermon tonight!

Sing Psalm 78, stanzas 1-4, 17-21
Read Romans 9:1-29

This is a hard passage.
It is not especially difficult to *understand* what Paul is saying.
He is pretty straightforward.

But we don't like to hear it.

We like to think that *we* are in charge.
We like to think that *we* get to define what is fair, just and right.

But Paul's answer to us is "who are you, O man, to answer back to God?"

At the end of Romans 8, Paul lays out the principle of election:

God has predestined some to eternal life.

But the doctrine of election raises a question for Paul:

Has the word of God failed?

Because God called Israel as well.

Israel was God's chosen people – the "elect" people of God.

But God appears to have *rejected* Israel.

How can Paul say that *nothing* can separate us from the love of God?

When plainly Israel *has been* separated from the love of God?

If God chooses you based on what he knows that you will do,
then his choice is based on works.
And that would overthrow the whole point of what Paul is saying here.
Paul's point is that God's choice is not based on works, but on "him who calls."

And he illustrates that with the example of twins – Jacob and Esau –
*though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—
in order that God's purpose of election might continue,
not because of works but because of his call—
she was told, 'The older will serve the younger,'
as it is written,
Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.*

But before Jacob or Esau had done anything good or bad,
God had already decided what he would do with them.
"The older will serve the younger."

What shall we say then?

Is there injustice on God's part?

Is it fair for God to love one twin and hate the other? [before they did anything!]
Isn't this unjust?

By no means! (Paul says)

And then he explains his answer by quoting from Exodus 33:

For he says to Moses,

*I will have mercy on whom I have mercy,
and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.*

Paul reminds us that all have sinned.
None of us deserve mercy.

If you think about it, that should be obvious.

Who deserves mercy?

No one.

The very *definition* of mercy is that it is free and undeserved.

And God made it clear to Moses that his mercy and compassion
is not based on anything other than his own purpose and choice.

So is there injustice with God?

No, because God is not *obligated* to show mercy to anyone.

God does not answer to you.

You do not get to tell God how he should run his universe.

He is God.

You are not.

As Paul concludes in verse 16:

*So then it depends not on human will or exertion
but on God, who has mercy.*

There is nothing you can do to earn God's mercy.
He acts according to his own purpose in election.

And this is true not only of Israel, but also of the nations:

For the scripture says to Pharaoh,

*For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you,
and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.*

So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills. (v17-18)

Here Paul quotes Exodus 9:16 which says that God raised up Pharaoh for a purpose:
Namely, that God might show his power in Pharaoh,
and that his name – the name of Yahweh – might be proclaimed in all the earth.

God's purpose in election is not merely in showing mercy on whom he will have mercy.
God's purpose in election is also to show forth his power
and that his name might be proclaimed in all the earth.

And for that purpose he has mercy on some,
and he hardens others.

Now Paul knows what reaction he will get to this.

*You will say to me then,
Why does he still find fault?
For who can resist his will?*

Paul understands the implications of what he has just said.

He has said that in some cases God actually hardens people,
preventing them from hearing his voice.

And Paul does not try to avoid the implications of this.

He doesn't even point out (as he could have rightly done!)
that Pharaoh hardened his own heart first,
and *then* God further hardened Pharaoh's heart to accomplish his purpose.

Paul is not trying to make this easy for you.

He *knows* that you want to judge God.

He *knows* that you think that you can tell God what he should and should not do.

*But who are you, O man, to answer back to God?
Who are you to judge God?*

*Will what is molded say to its molder,
Why have you made me like this? (v19-21)*

The creature has no right to sit in judgment against the Creator.
He is God.
You are not.

He is the potter.
We are the clay.
And out of the same lump (the nations)
 he made one vessel for honorable use (Cyrus – the quote from Isaiah)
 and one for dishonorable (Pharaoh).
In the same way out of the same lump (the twins, Esau and Jacob)
 he made one vessel for honorable use (Jacob)
 and one for dishonorable (Esau).

Let's be clear as to what Paul says here:
 God is the potter,
 and he has crafted some vessels of wrath, prepared for destruction.
 Some people – taken from the same lump of clay as we –
 were crafted in order to be hardened and destroyed.

But Paul says that God's purpose – his desire – his will in this matter –
 was to show his wrath and to make known his power.
And secondly,
 that God's purpose in this was to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy,
 which he has prepared beforehand for glory.

God has patiently endured the vessels of wrath
 because of his purpose in making known the riches of his glory to the vessels of mercy.

We struggle with this –
 we don't like to think that the purpose of someone's life might be
 to serve as a warning to others!

So let's take a closer look at Pharaoh –
 and what God is doing in Exodus 9-10.

We saw the first two cycles of plagues last week.

The first cycle of 3 plagues was designed to demonstrate that the LORD is God.

The water turned to blood, the frogs, and the gnats
were nuisances that demonstrated the power of God –
but did not seriously harm anyone.

The end result was that the magicians of Egypt declared:

“This is the finger of God.”

The second cycle of 3 plagues then identified this Yahweh as the God of Israel.

Not only is he *God* – but he is *your God* –
he is a God who cares for his people and protects them from harm –
and *brings judgment* against those who harm his people!

The flies, the plague on the livestock, and the boils
began to bring harm to Egypt –
but God protected his own people.

The end result was that Pharaoh recognizes that God has distinguished
between the people of Israel and the people of Pharaoh.

The plagues of the last cycle here in chapters 9-10 are simply terrifying.

The content of the plagues is bad enough:
massive hail breaking trees and smashing crops,
devastating locusts devouring everything that was left,
and then debilitating darkness.

But what God says to Pharaoh is even worse:

I could have done this quickly –
but I’m drawing this out and making it linger on purpose!

Why?

“so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.”

Yahweh is not simply the tribal deity of the Hebrews.

He is the God who created heaven and earth.

He does not simply wish to save “his people” and condemn all the earth.

His purpose is to bring his salvation to all the earth –
and so he begins to make a name for himself in the Exodus.

One of the objections to the Christian story

comes from those who ask, “Why did God take *thousands of years* to reveal himself?”

In one sense, the answer is much like Paul’s in Romans 9 –

He is God and you are not!

But in another sense we can say it like this:

We know that God’s purpose was for his only-begotten Son to become incarnate –
to enter our weakness and misery at a particular time and place.

In order for that to happen, he first had to set the stage by preparing that *particular* culture
(the Israelites) for the coming of his Son.

One necessary prerequisite for all of this was *the written word*.

The Exodus happens at the particular moment in history
when Semitic culture is developing the alphabet.

We have these curious inscriptions on rocks in the Sinai peninsula
from around the time of Abraham.

They form an intermediate stage between the hieroglyphic writing of Egypt
and the Phoenician alphabet.

Until you have an alphabet, it is very difficult to write books.
I don't doubt that God revealed himself in visions and dreams to the ancients –
Hebrews 1 says that God revealed himself in various ways and various times.
But God's purpose was to have a written revelation
that would gradually unfold his purposes –
until the day that the *Word* would become flesh and dwell among us.

And since Egypt was the dominant power in the ancient world,
he started by demonstrating *his power* over Pharaoh.

The third cycle of plagues will demonstrate that there is *no one* like the LORD our God.

First Cycle: Plagues 1-3 – The LORD Alone Is God

Second Cycle: Plagues 4-6 – And He Is *Your* God

Third Cycle: Plagues 7-9 – And There Is None Like Him in All the Earth

7. Hail: For This Reason I Have Raised You Up, to Show You My Power (9:13-35)

¹³ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Rise up early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. ¹⁴ For this time I will send all my plagues on you yourself,^[a] and on your servants and your people, so that you may know that there is none like me in all the earth. ¹⁵ For by now I could have put out my hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth. ¹⁶ But for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.

Like the first two cycles,
the third cycle of plagues begins with the LORD commanding Moses
to appear early in the morning before Pharaoh.
And once again, we hear the central call first:
“Let my people go, that they may serve me.”

We have seen this repeatedly already in Exodus:
Will Israel serve Pharaoh?

Or will Israel serve the LORD?

You will either be slaves of sin – or slaves of righteousness.

The word translated “serve” can also be translated “worship.”

It’s why we talk about the “worship service.”

In our worship, we acknowledge that we belong to the Lord our God.
Whoever you obey is the one whom you serve – the one you worship.

Verses 14-16 give us the purpose of what God is doing with Pharaoh.

God says in verse 14:

*this time I will send all my plagues on you yourself,
and on your servants and your people,
so that you may know that there is none like me in all the earth.*

But God is not simply bringing judgment on Egypt.

After all, if the purpose was to judge Egypt for their sins (v15):

*For by now I could have put out my hand and struck you and your people with pestilence,
and you would have been cut off from the earth.*

I could have just wiped you out (like I did with Sodom and Gomorrah),
but what I’m doing here is different.

And so he explains his purpose clearly in verse 16:

*But for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power,
so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.*

God’s purpose in raising up Pharaoh is so that *my name*
may be proclaimed in all the earth.

Three times in verses 14-16 God says that his purpose has to do with “all the earth.”

God’s purpose is to bring salvation to all the earth.

God’s purpose – as he revealed it to Abraham back in Genesis 12 –
was that all nations would be blessed through the Seed of Abraham.

And even as God declares his purpose in raising up Pharaoh –
he also reveals his purpose to show mercy to Pharaoh’s people.

¹⁷ You are still exalting yourself against my people and will not let them go. ¹⁸ Behold, about this time tomorrow I will cause very heavy hail to fall, such as never has been in Egypt from the day it was founded until now. ¹⁹ Now therefore send, get your livestock and all that you have in the field into safe shelter, for every man and beast that is in the field and is not brought home will die when the hail falls on them. ””” ²⁰ Then whoever feared the word of the LORD among the

servants of Pharaoh hurried his slaves and his livestock into the houses,²¹ but whoever did not pay attention to the word of the LORD left his slaves and his livestock in the field.

Notice verse 20.

When the LORD tells Pharaoh that heavy hail will fall –
and when the LORD gives advance warning
to bring the livestock in from the field,
“whoever feared the word of the LORD among the servants of Pharaoh
hurried his slaves and his livestock into the houses.”

Those who feared the word of the LORD paid attention to the warning.

In other words, God’s purpose in sending the plagues on Pharaoh
is already bearing fruit!

The Egyptians are beginning to fear the word of the LORD.

No, signs and wonders do not *produce* faith.
But where the word of the LORD goes forth
there you will find people believing the message!

²² *Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward heaven, so that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt, on man and beast and every plant of the field, in the land of Egypt.”*

²³ *Then Moses stretched out his staff toward heaven, and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire ran down to the earth. And the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt.* ²⁴ *There was hail and fire flashing continually in the midst of the hail, very heavy hail, such as had never been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.* ²⁵ *The hail struck down everything that was in the field in all the land of Egypt, both man and beast. And the hail struck down every plant of the field and broke every tree of the field.* ²⁶ *Only in the land of Goshen, where the people of Israel were, was there no hail.*

And so the LORD sent thunder and hail and fire down on the earth.

And this wasn’t just ordinary hail –
this was the heaviest hail ever known in Egypt.
It struck down all the plants of the field and every tree of the field –
it struck down both man and beast.

Only in the land of Goshen – where the people of Israel were – was there no hail.

Again, the LORD protects his people.

Pharaoh’s response in verse 27 is significant:

²⁷ *Then Pharaoh sent and called Moses and Aaron and said to them, “This time I have sinned; the LORD is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong.”* ²⁸ *Plead with the LORD, for there has been enough of God’s thunder and hail. I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer.”*

Pharaoh begins to repent.

He acknowledges his sin – that he is wrong and the LORD is right.

I say “begins” because Pharaoh’s repentance is *not* whole-hearted.

As Moses says in verse 30:

²⁹ Moses said to him, “As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will stretch out my hands to the LORD. The thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, so that you may know that the earth is the LORD’s. ³⁰ But as for you and your servants, I know that you do not yet fear the LORD God.”

Yes, some are beginning to fear the word of the LORD –

but Pharaoh and his advisors do not *fear the LORD*.

And therefore, their repentance is sorely lacking.

Our shorter catechism says it well:

“Repentance unto life is a saving grace whereby a sinner,
out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ,
does, with grief and hatred of his sin,
turn from it unto God,
with full purpose of and endeavor after, new obedience.”

You can see in Pharaoh a “true sense of his sin” –

but you do not see an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ –

you do see grief over the *consequences* of his sin –

but not necessarily a grief and hatred of his *sin*.

And sure enough (verse 34):

³¹ (The flax and the barley were struck down, for the barley was in the ear and the flax was in bud. ³² But the wheat and the emmer^[b] were not struck down, for they are late in coming up.)

³³ So Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh and stretched out his hands to the LORD, and the thunder and the hail ceased, and the rain no longer poured upon the earth. ³⁴ But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet again and hardened his heart, he and his servants. ³⁵ So the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people of Israel go, just as the LORD had spoken through Moses.

If you want to understand the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart,

the seventh plague is the key.

The LORD has clearly communicated his purpose and his plan.

He has called Pharaoh to repent –

and when Pharaoh uses the *language* of repentance,

God accepts Pharaoh's words
(though even Moses can see that Pharaoh is not sincere!)

But Pharaoh's repentance is not a repentance unto life.

He does not turn away from his sin.

He sinned yet again.

He turns back to his sin – and hardens his heart against the LORD.

From here on out, the LORD will harden his heart.

There comes a point when time runs out.

God will give you many chances to repent.

But if you reject those chances over and over again,
eventually your time will run out.

Pharaoh will serve as a warning to all ages:

if you persist in rejecting the word of the LORD,
eventually your heart will become so hard

that there will be nothing more you can do.

8. Locusts: Plead with the LORD Your God to Remove This Death from Me (10:1-20)

And so, in chapter 10, the LORD says to Moses:

10 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that I may show these signs of mine among them, ² and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and of your grandson how I have dealt harshly with the Egyptians and what signs I have done among them, that you may know that I am the LORD."

And so for the third time (just like with plagues 2 and 5),
the LORD says to Moses, go in to Pharaoh... (there is an "indoor" encounter).

And God says "I have hardened his heart."

How did God harden his heart?

It is pretty clear that God did not do anything special to harden Pharaoh's heart.

In fact, the way that God hardened Pharaoh's heart

is by allowing Pharaoh to do what comes naturally to him!

And so Moses and Aaron warn Pharaoh that locusts are coming tomorrow.

³ So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh and said to him, "Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, 'How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go, that they may serve me. ⁴ For if you refuse to let my people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring locusts into your country, ⁵ and they shall cover the face of the land, so that no one can see the land. And they

shall eat what is left to you after the hail, and they shall eat every tree of yours that grows in the field,⁶ and they shall fill your houses and the houses of all your servants and of all the Egyptians, as neither your fathers nor your grandfathers have seen, from the day they came on earth to this day.’” Then he turned and went out from Pharaoh.

Pharaoh’s servants seem to understand the situation better than Pharaoh (verse 7):

⁷ Then Pharaoh’s servants said to him, “How long shall this man be a snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their God. Do you not yet understand that Egypt is ruined?”

⁸ So Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh. And he said to them, “Go, serve the LORD your God. But which ones are to go?” ⁹ Moses said, “We will go with our young and our old. We will go with our sons and daughters and with our flocks and herds, for we must hold a feast to the LORD.” ¹⁰ But he said to them, “The LORD be with you, if ever I let you and your little ones go! Look, you have some evil purpose in mind.^[e] ¹¹ No! Go, the men among you, and serve the LORD, for that is what you are asking.” And they were driven out from Pharaoh’s presence.

But Pharaoh is still obsessed with keeping his slaves:

He will let the Israelite *men* go – so long as their wives and children stay in Egypt –
but he will not let the whole community leave.

Pharaoh is operating with a very Egyptian idea of worship.

In Egypt, the *men* would worship at the temples.

Women and children were not included.

Indeed, the “common folk” were not permitted in Egyptian temples at all!

But the LORD calls *all* his people – men and women, young and old alike –
to come and worship him.

You can see here the root of what Paul will say in Galatians 3 –

In Christ, there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free,
there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Gal 3:28)

That principle has its root in the LORD’s insistence

that *all* of his people – male, female, old, young –

and, as we will see – both Israelite *and* the mixed multitude that went with them –
must gather to worship the LORD.

But Pharaoh doesn’t understand this at all.

And so Pharaoh says with great sarcasm in verse 10:

“The LORD be with you, if ever I let you and your little ones go!”

Indeed.

That is the point!

The LORD will be with his people – with great power and might!

¹² Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, so that they may come upon the land of Egypt and eat every plant in the land, all that the hail has left.” ¹³ So Moses stretched out his staff over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind upon the land all that day and all that night. When it was morning, the east wind had brought the locusts. ¹⁴ The locusts came up over all the land of Egypt and settled on the whole country of Egypt, such a dense swarm of locusts as had never been before, nor ever will be again. ¹⁵ They covered the face of the whole land, so that the land was darkened, and they ate all the plants in the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left. Not a green thing remained, neither tree nor plant of the field, through all the land of Egypt.

And so the LORD brings an east wind upon the land.

The east wind blows off the desert of Arabia.

The east wind is a hot, dry wind.

Throughout the scriptures the east wind is always a wind of judgment.

And by morning the east wind has brought the worst locust plague in history.

Locust swarms are a common occurrence in the middle east.

There are photographs from some of the early 20th century locust swarms

“before-and-after” shots of gardens and orchards.

A locust swarm can turn a pleasant garden into a barren desert.

The flax and the barley had been smashed by the hail.

It is likely that the comment in verses 31-32 sets this up.

Now the wheat and the emmer – whatever is left – is consumed by the locusts.

And so Pharaoh again confesses his sin –

both against God and against Moses and Aaron.

¹⁶ Then Pharaoh hastily called Moses and Aaron and said, “I have sinned against the LORD your God, and against you. ¹⁷ Now therefore, forgive my sin, please, only this once, and plead with the LORD your God only to remove this death from me.” ¹⁸ So he went out from Pharaoh and pleaded with the LORD. ¹⁹ And the LORD turned the wind into a very strong west wind, which lifted the locusts and drove them into the Red Sea. Not a single locust was left in all the country of Egypt. ²⁰ But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the people of Israel go.

And again we see that Pharaoh's repentance is not a repentance unto life.

Pharaoh recognizes his sin for what it is – it is sin against God and others.

And he recognizes that the wages of sin is death!

He sees that his sin has resulted in the death of Egypt.

But even so, there is no commitment to turn away from sin and do what is right.

Pharaoh's chief concern is with the consequences of his sin:

“Plead with the LORD your God only to remove this death from me.”

If your repentance is concerned only with escaping consequences,

then you are simply digging the hole deeper!

9. Darkness: The LORD Hardened Pharaoh's Heart (10:21-29)

And as in the first two cycles,
the third cycle also concludes with the LORD commanding Moses
regarding a third plague that comes without warning:

²¹ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, a darkness to be felt." ²² So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was pitch darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. ²³ They did not see one another, nor did anyone rise from his place for three days, but all the people of Israel had light where they lived.

And with the 9th plague, creation has been entirely undone.
In the beginning God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.
Now darkness falls on all Egypt.

One of the chief gods of Egypt was the sun-god, Re.
But there is no reference to him here.
The LORD does not dignify the gods of Egypt by naming them.
He simply overpowers and overshadows them,
so that Egypt (and all the earth) will know that Yahweh is God.

In some respects the hail and the locusts were the worst plagues so far.
People died in the hail.
The hail and the locusts destroyed most of the food –
so Egyptians will starve.
But darkness is a more terrifying plague –
because the hail and the locusts will pass away –
and the crops will grow again next year.
But if there is no light, there is no life.
Darkness brings to completion the undoing of creation.

This is why at the death of the Firstborn Son of God,
Darkness is the plague that will come upon him for three hours.
And as Egypt spent three days in the grip of a darkness that could be felt,
even so our Lord Jesus spent three days in the grip of death
and the darkness of the grave.

In this case, the darkness lasts for three days – and when it lifts, Pharaoh calls Moses:

²⁴ Then Pharaoh called Moses and said, “Go, serve the LORD; your little ones also may go with you; only let your flocks and your herds remain behind.”

But Pharaoh is still trying to bargain with God!

He is still trying to get the best deal possible.

²⁵ But Moses said, “You must also let us have sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God. ²⁶ Our livestock also must go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind, for we must take of them to serve the LORD our God, and we do not know with what we must serve the LORD until we arrive there.” ²⁷ But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go.

But Moses insists that he cannot budge from the requirements of the LORD.

Twice he uses our key word: “serve” in verse 26 –

“we must take of our livestock to *serve* the LORD our God,
and we do not know with what we must *serve* the LORD until we arrive there.”

Israel is called to serve/worship the LORD alone.

The Son of God cannot serve two masters.

And so Pharaoh declares that the negotiations are over.

²⁸ Then Pharaoh said to him, “Get away from me; take care never to see my face again, for on the day you see my face you shall die.” ²⁹ Moses said, “As you say! I will not see your face again.”

And Moses agrees: so be it.

Again, if you want to translate this into a more modern idiom –

“Fine with me – I don’t want to see you either!”

Moses and Pharaoh *will* see each other again (indeed, Pharaoh will summon Moses in ch 12),
but only after *God* has rendered Pharaoh’s threat hollow and empty!

The plagues of Egypt reverse creation –

returning the land of Egypt to a barren wasteland (the *tohu vbohu* of Genesis 1).

The God who created all things also has the power to undo creation.

But this mighty power of God over creation

is revealed here as God’s work of *new creation*.

God is bringing a new creation in the creation of Israel –

Israel is my son, my firstborn –

Let my son go that he may serve (worship) me.

As one commentator puts it,

At the cross of Christ, “darkness came over the earth, the earth shook, and rocks split.
Here, too, creation signals the deliverance of God’s people,
but only by means of the punishment of God’s Son.” (Enns, 233)
Jesus bears in his own body the plagues of Egypt, Israel, and Babylon.

And our Lord Jesus is coming again in power to judge both the living and the dead.

“Exodus is a down payment and earthly depiction of the final cataclysm,
one that is so powerful, so ultimate, so final,
that it can only be described in a manner reminiscent of these earlier earthly acts.”
(Enns, 234)

Creation is waiting – groaning – longing – for the revelation of the sons of God –
because until the resurrection of the body –
until the restoration of all things –
the creation cannot become all that it was intended to be.

What does God himself say is the purpose of this text?

“that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.”

Today, this scripture is fulfilled in your midst.

More than 3,000 years ago, far away in the land of Egypt,
the mightiest King in all the earth heard these words and laughed.
At that time, the name of Yahweh was known to a few thousand slaves –
and a handful of peoples who had come in contact with them.
Today that name is proclaimed in all the earth –
and his mighty deeds are recounted in every nation under heaven.

Therefore, today, if you hear his voice,

do not harden your hearts – as Pharaoh did.

Do not harden your hearts – as those Israelites did who witnessed the plagues of Egypt,
and then rebelled against the LORD.

But repent!

For whoever calls upon the name of the LORD Jesus Christ will be saved.