

It's Always Darkest Before The Dawn

Long Beach Alliance Church • March 27th, 2011 • Pastor Chris Lankford

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward the sky, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even a darkness which may be felt.”

~Exodus 10:21 (NASB)

1) The Interior Of The Soul Revealed

- A) Without warning, the LORD calls on Moses to judge Pharaoh/Egypt with darkness “over the land” (Exodus 10:21). The darkness is so complete, it can be “felt” by those in the dark!
- B) Like the deepest, darkest cave one can imagine, the darkness over Egypt presses in against the people like a claustrophobic blanket. The darkness cannot be penetrated by any light source whatsoever.
- C) Like the other judgments against Pharaoh & Egypt, this judgment is an outward expression of the interior of the Egyptian soul. The religious and moral darkness of the people is now physically manifest through the land.
- D) Some scholars believe that the darkness was teamed with a thick oppressive cloud which hung like a black fog in Egypt, a sort of “sandstorm on steroids” that prevented movement for the people for three full days (10:22-23).

2) God vs. Pharaoh ~ Round #9

- A) The absence of light in the land of Egypt (except in Israelite dwellings, 10:23) was a direct attack against one of the most powerful deities in Egypt, the sun-God Ra.
- B) Egyptians regularly sang hymns in worship to Ra, and the Pharaoh’s presented sacrifices to Ra for the great benevolence of providing sun and warmth for Egypt. Pharaoh was himself a physical representation of Ra in Egyptian religion, shining to all the goodness of the sun.
- C) The oppressive and blanketing nature of this plague must have been horrifying in the land! As the days wore on, Pharaoh’s inability to help his people would have been damaging to his leadership, and his future as king.

3) Plague #9 ~ Swallowed By The Darkness

- A) In desperation, Pharaoh again tries to compromise with God (10:24). But Moses knows this ploy, and insists to Pharaoh that nothing from Israel be left behind in Egypt (10:25-26).
- B) Again, Pharaoh’s heart is hardened by God, and he refuses to let the Israelites go away from Egypt (10:27). Pharaoh refuses to give up control, despite all of the signs and judgments which revealed his impotence!
- C) But this time, Pharaoh flies into a rage against Moses, screaming at him to go away, and threatening Moses upon pain of death (10:28). Moses says goodbye to Pharaoh in dramatic fashion, foreshadowing someone’s death (10:29).

For further discussion with your family, spouse, or small group study... Do you ever feel like the darkness of a situation is swallowing you alive? How do you respond when it seems like there is no light, almost as though Jesus has left you all alone? How do you handle the darkest times of your own soul? Does God allow difficult and dark times for a reason? Why did God plunge Egypt into darkness? How do you “turn on the lights” when in the dark?