

**There Is a Difference**  
**Exodus 8:16-32**

We are honored to be with you today. Each moment we have is a gift from God, and we trust He will bless you as you spend these moments with us. We are Heralds of Hope, and our goal is to use media, like literature, radio, and internet, to make disciples of Jesus Christ to accomplish the great commission in our lifetime. We know this is a big goal, but we believe if God's people will stay focused, we can do this.

A listener recently shared this testimony with us. "Your teachings are all inspiring, but this week was very inspiring. Since my wife and I have decided to follow Jesus, we have had to give up our house and job. We are in the process of moving for the second time in four months. Your teachings have helped us to see Jesus as He is in this time of great deception."

Praise God, Jesus is with this couple, and they are growing in their understanding of Him; this is our goal for every listener. If you would like to share your testimony with us, we would love to hear it. We will share a few ways you can contact us at the end of the program.

Now turn to Exodus, and we will continue our journey through this wonderful book. We hope you will be blessed by this teaching; now, here is Bible teacher J. Mark Horst.

Can you tell the difference between a cow and a horse? What about the difference between a sheep and a goat, or between a camel and a donkey? You say those are stupid questions; of course, there is a difference between a cow and a horse, a sheep and a goat, and a camel and a donkey. Anybody should know that.

People from around the world contact us at *Heralds of Hope*. They ask questions like these: Tell me how to believe; Tell me more about God; I want you to help me because I am searching for God. Well, if you are searching for God, I want to help you see the difference between the people of God and other people.

Do you think there are no differences in religions? Some people think that. Hopefully, you are not one of them. There are very marked differences in religions, and I want to talk with you about that. From Exodus 8:16-32, we will see THERE IS A DIFFERENCE in religions.

*16. And the LORD said unto Moses, say unto Aaron, stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.*

17. And they did so; for Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and smote the dust of the earth, and it became lice in man, and in beast; all the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt.

18. And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not: so there were lice upon man, and upon beast.

19. Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, this is the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them as the LORD had said.

20. And the LORD said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh: lo, he cometh forth to the water; and say unto him, thus saith the LORD, let my people go, that they may serve me.

21. Else, if thou wilt not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy houses: and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground whereon they are.

22. And I will sever in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there; to the end thou mayest know that I am the LORD in the midst of the earth.

23. And I will put a division between my people and thy people: tomorrow shall this sign be.

24. And the LORD did so; and there came a grievous swarm of flies into the house of Pharaoh, and into his servants' houses, and into all the land of Egypt: the land was corrupted by reason of the swarm of flies.

25. And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land.

26. And Moses said, it is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the LORD our God: lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us?

27. We will go three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the LORD our God, as he shall command us.

28. And Pharaoh said, I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness; only ye shall not go very far away: intreat for me.

29. And Moses said, Behold, I go out from thee, and I will entreat the LORD that the swarms of flies may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people, tomorrow: but let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more in not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD.

30. And Moses went out from Pharaoh and entreated the LORD.

*31. And the LORD did according to the word of Moses; and he removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people; there remained not one.*

*32. And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go.*

This Scripture shows us there are certain PROOFS of difference among religions. This proof may help to answer some of your questions.

The First Proof is,

### **The Verdict of the Magician's Power**

The power of the magicians was limited. Up to this point, the magicians of Egypt were able to imitate the things that Moses had done when changing water into blood and bringing up frogs from the river. But this time, when Aaron struck the dust of the earth with his rod, it became crawling lice, and they could not do it. They soberly said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." They admitted that this was beyond their abilities.

Mankind can go only so far with his enchantments or with his sleight of hand tricks. This was beyond the power of the magicians. They were not able to do what Aaron had done in smiting the dust of the earth with his rod and turning it all into crawling lice.

So, they confessed they were not able to go any further. Their verdict was that this was beyond their power. There was a difference between their false religion and the true religion of Jehovah God. It was demonstrated there. Here was proof enough that there was a difference because they could not duplicate God's power.

Here is the second proof:

### **The Vindication of God's People**

We learn that God sets His people apart. God does not treat His own people like He treats the wicked. God deals differently with those who trust in Him than He does with others. Here it is so clear that it is difficult for me to see how anybody could be mistaken about it, because He said, "I will set apart in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell...And I will put a division between my people and thy people: tomorrow shall this sign be."

I believe that God still operates that way. There is a difference between those who trust in the Lord and those who do not. I sometimes explain it like this: there is a certain area where the justice of God must operate because in order to be righteous, He must also be just.

Then there is another area where the mercy of God operates because God is merciful and gracious. He could not be just if He were not merciful, you see. He could not be merciful if He were not just. The difference comes in this consideration: you make the choice into which area you come. The people of God were trusting in Him, and He said, "I am going to make a division." He had purpose in the proof. He said furthermore, "This is the reason I am doing this to the end, that thou mayest know that I am the LORD in the midst of the earth."

Some people think of God as being way out there, unreachable. He is the God out there. But we know He is also the God who is present with His people. Moses showed Pharaoh that God makes a difference between His people and other people because He is in the midst of the earth.

Now you have the third proof that there is a difference:

#### **The Violation of Pharaoh's Promise**

He said, "I will let you go...entreat the Lord for me that these flies leave." Imagine! All the horrid swarms of flies just simply crawling all over. Now the Bible says the land was corrupted by reason of these swarms of flies everywhere. Flies are filthy disease carriers. So, when the situation got intolerable, then Pharaoh said, "Entreat the LORD, and I will let you go."

But he did not follow through; he didn't keep his promise. He hardened his heart again and would not let the people go. I've met people like that; they make promises to the Lord when life is difficult and when the situation is hard, but as soon as it is relieved, they forget. Men cannot be trusted. Like Pharaoh, they're prone to change their mind. But God can be trusted.

There is a difference between unfaithful men and the faithful God. There is a difference, I tell you. There is a difference between the power of the magicians and the power of God. There is a difference between the people of God and the people who are not.

So, the proof is here for you. There is a difference. Human power has its limitations. Man can go so far and no farther. There is a difference between the power of God and the power of men. This is well demonstrated and proven in this text by the magicians who said, "This is the finger of God." They could go no farther.

Further proof is that God makes a difference between those who belong to Him and those who do not. He put a distinct line between His people and Pharaoh's people. It reminds me of the words of Abraham when he was pleading for the Lord to spare Sodom. He said, "*Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*"

Remember, too, there is a difference between the unfaithfulness of men and the faithfulness of God. Pharaoh demonstrated and proved it beyond doubt. At one time, he said, "Yes, I'll let you go," and as soon as the situation was relieved, he refused to keep his promise. But God doesn't operate that way. When God makes a promise, He keeps it. Yes, He keeps all of His promises. God can be trusted.

Yes, there is a difference. All religions are not the same. The proof is here for you. Check it out for yourself. Trust in the God who makes the difference.

Thank you, J. Mark, for this teaching, and thank you for joining us today; we trust that you have been blessed. If you have been, we would love to hear how. Our contact information is coming. If you have any questions or comments, we would also love to hear from you.

It is a blessing to serve a God who is personal and with us; He is Emmanuel. It reminds me of a line of poetry by Elizabeth Browning. She said, "Earth is crammed with heaven, and every common bush afire with God, but only he who sees takes off his shoes; the rest sit round and pluck blackberries." Do we look for and see God? Can you see Him in normal routine life? He certainly is present, but not everyone sees Him; we must have eyes for Him. Let's be like Moses and see God. When we do, we will worship Him and share this good news with others, so others see our great God.

As I mentioned before, we would love to hear from you; here are some ways you can connect with us. One of the best ways is via email. Our email is [mail@heraldsofhope.org](mailto:mail@heraldsofhope.org). If you don't have email, our mailing address is Hope for Today, Box 3, Breezewood, PA 15533. Or you can connect with us on our website. Our website is [Heraldsofhope.org](http://Heraldsofhope.org). If you are there, please check out the listen tab and listen to other teaching from Heralds of Hope. On our website, you will also find other resources, and we hope you find these beneficial. Again, the website is [www.heraldsofhope.org](http://www.heraldsofhope.org).

This brings us to the end of today's program; thanks for being there. Please join us next week as we continue our journey through Exodus. Go with God this week, and we hope you will see Him and respond like the cherubim in Isaiah. "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory." May we Praise His great Name.