



VoydPhil News

Thorn In The Flesh

It has been difficult to write this Newsletter. Not because of subject matter but because of personal ailments. I was laid up by the most extreme migraine; one that even the hospital didn't do much to cure. But within my pain and delusion from medication, the Lord brought to me **2Corinthians 12:7-10**.

This very familiar verse where Paul talks about his "thorn in the flesh". What was his thorn? No one seems to have a definitive answer on that. Ranging from temptation, enemies of Christ, and physical maladies. With all sense of humor, I have sometimes wondered if it wasn't just truly a thorn that he got stuck in his flesh.

I don't know what it was for Paul, to me for a time it was intense pain. And after all the home and medical remedies failed to relieve me, all I had to comfort me was the Lord's grace. And that was manifested in the love, time and care of my darling wife. I pray that whatever your thorn is, you find comfort in His efficient grace.

We are now on
Facebook
Check out the
VoydPhil page.



Helping to Fill the Void in God's People

November 2010— January 2011

Vol. 1 No. 10

First Plague—Blood

Part 1

By Mark E. Benjamin

The first of the ten plagues is the turning of the Nile river in Egypt into blood. I would venture to guess that most already know this, not just those having a religious background, but also those of a secular upbringing. But, I would also guess that many of those same people may not know of some wonderful connectivity between this event and ones that took place many years later. About 1,500 years later. Furthermore even fewer may know of the inter-workings of the original event itself.

Let's first do some review on what took place during the first plague. Read **Exodus 7**, but specifically **Exodus 7: 17-21** for the background. With instructions from GOD Moses used his staff and turned not just the Nile river into blood, but all water in Egypt. **Exodus 7:19 The LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt-- over the streams and canals, over the ponds and all the reservoirs'-- and they will turn to blood. Blood will be everywhere in Egypt, even in the wooden buckets and stone jars."** Everywhere there was water it was now blood. First off, and I think everyone would agree on this, is Yuck! Not only was there no water to drink, wash or cook with, but think of the intense grossness of the scenery. The smell of all those dead fish, the blood lapping on the banks of the Nile, what foul surroundings.

Why start with the Nile?

For Moses to start with the Nile as a plague was very appropriate since Moses started his life there. The male Israelite babies were thrown into the Nile (**Exodus 1:22**).

Although Moses did end up in the Nile, it was by his own Mother and not by Pharaoh's hands.

This had two major results. First, as stated in Exodus, it helped to reduce the overpopulation of the Hebrews, a twisted plot of pharaoh's. The second, it would have been a great sacrifice offered to the gods associated with the Nile. However, the life giving Nile did not devour all given to it; it returned one of the babies. Moses, by the plan devised by his mother, made it look like life was being given back. To the Egyptians, and specifically Pharaoh's daughter, it would have been interpreted as a gift from their gods.

Therefore, when Moses performs the first plague and the Nile gods' blood spilled, the very life given from the Nile (Moses) is the very life that kills the Nile gods. Also with all the life that was thrown into the Nile to die, death of the Nile was a very significant first step. It would have been a symbol of retribution for the death of the countless Hebrew babies.

Just as Moses was life (physical life) from the pagan Nile gods, Jesus was life (eternal life) from the one true God. Moses came from the life giving water of the Nile to deliver the Hebrew nation. Jesus was the living water given to deliver all the nations (**John 4**).

Why blood?

GOD could have had the Nile turn into anything. Like maple syrup, orange juice or just simply have it dry up. However, He chose to turn it into blood. I believe we can find several reasons for the

Continue on back page...

If you have any comments, questions or suggestions on topics in this issue, please go to www.VoydPhil.org and fill out our comment form. We love to hear them.

Israel News

A Nice Place To Visit

The latest numbers from the Central Bureau of Statistics show that 2.5 million tourists have visited Israel so far this year. This is an increase of 27 percent over last year. After 70 million shekels invested in marketing Israel as a place to stop for awhile, I would hope for an increase.

Certainly Israel is not short on fascinating and important places of historical and religious value; and not to mention a place of tremendous beauty. It is no wonder why people from all over the world want to go to the Holy Lands.

There has also been a rise in the number of immigrants to Israel. An increase of some 18 percent from the previous year.

But whereas there is an increase in immigration and visitation to Israel,

there is a drop in Christians living in the Promise Land. A report from Vatican City states a drop of 2 percent in the population. In 1980 3.8 percent of Israel was Christian, but now only 1.83 of the people living in Israel profess a faith in Christ.

There are various speculations as to why the Christians are leaving Israel. Ranging from the increase of Islamic extremists in the area to the continuation of the Israeli / Palestinian conflict and even persecution of Christians.

I wonder if it is something much simpler than all of that. With what has been seen and heard lately from all around the world; I wonder if the Christians are leaving their Savior's birthplace simply because we have begun to turn our backs on the Jews—yet once again.

...Continued from front page

selection of blood. First and simplest, to change into blood would be much more dramatic than any other liquid. Even for the non-religious, that would have been an unforgettable sight. Furthermore, those of even the slightest of knowledge in the gods of the land would have been distraught over the event.

The Egyptian god Osiris was the god of the underworld and the Nile believed to be his blood-stream. Not only did the Nile give life to the desert land in a real and practical

way, but was also thought to be the visible life substance of Osiris. Changing it to blood showed the death of Osiris, as it did the gods Hapi (spirit of the Nile) and Khnum (guardian of the Nile).

Blood also would be a key element in the tenth and final plague. Whereas blood showed death in the first plague, in the last plague blood gave life. Blood used in the last plague protected the Israelites from God, but blood with the first plague showed the lack of protection by the Egyptian gods. Blood showed the imminent death of slavery and Egyptian rule

Upcoming Holidays

Holidays begin at sundown on the evening before the date listed.

Hanukkah

25 Kislev-2 Tevet 5771

December 2-9, 2010

Thur-Thur

Tu B'Shvat

(New Year for Trees)

15 Shvat 5771

January 20, 2011

Thur

Purim

14 Adar II 5771

March 20, 2011

Sun

Mark E. Benjamin

Is available for

Church or Synagogue

Youth Group

Torah or Bible study

Classroom

Seminars

Men's, Woman's, Single's, Couples' groups

Topics Can Include

Passover

Seder

Sukkot

Bringing Jews and Christians closer together

Understanding the Christian or Jew

Jewish Holidays

And others

For more information, please go to

www.VoydPhil.org

"It is up to our generation to resolve these difficult issues. If we stay passive the negative forces will gain strength."

Shimon Peres

Born: August 2, 1923

8th Prime Minister of Israel

1st term: September 13, 1984—October 20, 1986

2nd term: November 4, 1995—June 18, 1996

9th President of Israel

July 15, 2007—present

with the first plague, freedom and the birth of the nation of Israel with the tenth plague.

Continue next issue...