

# The Danger of a Compromised Life

by Greg Laurie

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*Greg Laurie discusses the dangers of a compromised life and encourages believers to remain steadfast in their faith amidst spiritual battles.*

**Duration:** 1:01:23

**Scripture:** Genesis 17:1, Genesis 18:14, Exodus 6:2-3, Exodus 6:9, Exodus 7:10, Exodus 7:13, John 15:15

**Topics:** "Compromise"

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## Description

In this sermon titled 'The Danger of a Compromised Life,' Pastor Greg Laurie discusses the story of Moses and the Israelites in the book of Exodus. He highlights how the Israelites initially did not believe Moses because they were worn out and resentful due to their cruel bondage. Pastor Greg also mentions the various plagues that God sent upon Egypt to convince Pharaoh to release the Israelites, including the insect invasion. Despite facing numerous challenges and setbacks, Moses remained obedient to God's calling. The sermon emphasizes the importance of not compromising our faith and remaining steadfast in our obedience to God.

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## Transcript

This is a presentation by pastor and author Greg Laurie, recorded at Harvest Christian Fellowship in Riverside, California. As is the case with each of the audio messages from A New Beginning, this presentation is dedicated to bringing you into a deeper knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Pastor Greg titles this message, The Danger of a Compromised Life.

Well, prior to coming to know Jesus Christ, each of us run to the power and control of Satan, the God of this world. You know, it's kind of funny how people will say that they think they're in control of their own lives, and the reason they don't want to become a Christian is because they fear losing the control that they have, when in reality, the Bible teaches the very opposite. Scripture tells us that the God of this world, speaking of Satan, has blinded the eyes of them that believe not, and that Satan has taken us captive to do his own will.

We were all under his control. He promised us fun, but instead he brought us misery. He promised us life, but instead he brought us death.

And the clever strategy that he was able to play out with many of us is we did not even think that he existed, but he certainly did. And he was there manipulating our lives. But one day, it dawned on us that

there was a God who loved us.

Maybe we'd heard the gospel here and there throughout our lives, but suddenly it crystallized for us. It came into focus, and we put our faith in Jesus Christ, because we realized that he died on the cross for us, he shed his blood for us, and we made that commitment. We took the plunge, and we believed.

Well, I hope that you weren't expecting a standing ovation in hell, because the devil is not happy about that. You see, because he's lost one of his own. Jesus described Satan as a strong man guarding his house, and he is only able to be overcome when a stronger one enters the picture, as Jesus mentioned in that particular parable.

And that stronger one was Christ himself coming into our lives. So Satan has reluctantly released control of us, because we are now the purchased possession of Jesus because of the blood that he shed for us. But Satan's goal is to keep us from moving forward spiritually.

Hence, the spiritual battle begins. And the Bible tells us that we're not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers and spiritual might in the heavenly places. You know, sometimes I'll talk to younger believers and they're rather distressed over the fact that they're engaging in a lot of spiritual battle, they're being tempted a lot, and they think maybe they're doing something wrong.

And I love to reassure them and say, *a contraire*, a little French there, it's because you're doing something right. You see, if you are not engaged in spiritual battle, if you don't find yourself being tempted, if you don't find yourself being opposed by the enemy, then something is wrong in your life spiritually. Because if you are really following the Lord as you ought to, and thus are a threat to the kingdom of Satan and his forces, then you are going to face opposition.

You can bank on it. So cheer up that temptation, that hassle, that opposition is a confirmation that you indeed are on the right track. Now, Satan knows that he cannot overpower God.

Therefore, he knows that he needs to draw you out on your own will. And he's not going to necessarily tell you what his strategy is, but we see it throughout scripture. And one of the most effective strategies he utilizes is that of compromise.

As I already said, first, he would like to defeat the believer outright, not even allowing them to come to faith, but having conceded that because there's nothing he can do about it. He will then try to neutralize you spiritually through the subtle but effective trap of compromise. So he'll try to take you one bite at a time.

Well, this is well illustrated in the story before us here in Exodus chapter 5. This is the story of Moses and his confrontation with a Pharaoh over the deliverance of the Israelites out of the land of Egypt. Now, God had made it clear to Moses that he was to go into the court of Pharaoh and demand the complete release of the Israelites and their children and their livestock and their possessions. There was to be no concession, no compromise.

And this was the plan. And God also told Moses that he would confirm his word with dramatic miracles to prove to the Pharaoh that he was indeed sent by God. Now, as we have already seen, Moses was once raised in the court of the Pharaoh.

And it's a distinct possibility that he might have become the very Pharaoh of Egypt himself. But because one day he saw the injustice of a Egyptian beating a Hebrew, he looked to the right and he looked to the left and he killed the Egyptian. And then he was sent into exile.

And it was during that time that God transformed Moses and commissioned him to do what he was called to do. So now Moses has spent a lot of time in the desert. He's gotten his BD, backside of the desert, and he's equipped, he's ready to go in and demand the release of the Israelites.

God warned Moses, and it wasn't going to be easy, that Pharaoh was going to harden his heart, but that God would ultimately prevail. So the story starts in Exodus chapter five, and we're going to read verses one to 12. Afterward, Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, thus says the Lord God of Israel, let my people go that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.

And Pharaoh said, who is the Lord that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, nor will I let Israel go. So they said, the God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us go three days journey into the desert and sacrifice to the Lord our God, lest he fall upon us with pestilence or with sword.

Then the King of Egypt said to them, Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people from the work? Get back to their labor. And Pharaoh said, look, the people of the land are many now, and you make them rush from their labor. So that same day, Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters to go to the people and their officers saying, you will no longer give the people straw to make brick as before.

Let them gather straw for themselves and you'll lay on them the quota of bricks, which they made before. You shall not reduce it for their idol. And they're crying out saying, let's go.

Let us go sacrifice to our God. Let more work be laid on the men less, uh, that they may labor in it and let them not regard false words. So the taskmasters of the people and the officers went and spoke to the people saying, thus says Pharaoh, I will not give you straw.

Go get yourself straw where you can find yet. None of your work will be reduced. So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt together, stubble instead of straw.

We'll stop there. Have you ever had one of those really bad days when nothing seemed to be going your way, or have you ever been certain that something was the will of God, but instead of doors opening, they seem to be slamming in rapid succession? Well, if so, then you have a general idea of how Moses felt on this particular day. I mean, in his defense, here he is obeying God and boldly taking this massive step of faith and obedience to go into the court of the most powerful man on the face of the earth and demand the release of the Israelites.

Now Moses knew this wasn't going to be easy, but this was a complete disaster. Not only did Pharaoh not concede to Moses request, but he actually made the Jews burdens even worse than it had been before. Now at the end of chapter four of Exodus, we read that Moses and Aaron had already met with the leaders of Israel and told them of their mission.

Moses even did his few miracles to convince them that he was indeed sent by God. And they agree wholeheartedly and said, we believe that you are the answer to our prayers, Moses. We believe that you've been sent by the Lord to deliver us from the Egyptians and you go with God and we'll be praying for you.

This is great. But then when the Pharaoh blows his top, the people that were behind him suddenly turn against him. Now, where was their faith? Maybe these Israeli elders thought that this is going to be a slam dunk.

Maybe they just thought that Moses would stroll into the Pharaoh's court, blow him away with a few signs and wonders, and the gates of Egypt would swing wide open and the Israelites would be that way or be on their way rather, but it did not go that way. And it rarely does. Why is it that we think when we endeavor to do something for God, it's going to be easy? Don't we realize it's always going to be tough? Now, some doors will open a little more easily than other, but you've got to know when you're seeking to win people to Christ, when you're seeking to be used by God, when you're wanting your life to make a difference, that you are going to face opposition.

And these fickle elders turned against Moses and Aaron. Look at chapter five, verses 20 and 22. They came out from Pharaoh and met Moses and Aaron who stood there to meet them.

And they said, let the Lord look on you and judge because you have made us abhorrent in the sight of Pharaoh and on the side of his servants to put a sword in their hand to kill us. So Moses returned to the Lord and said, Lord, why have you brought trouble on these people? Why is it that you have sent me? So here are these elders of Israel saying, Moses, you've made our lives worse. Why have you done this? It wasn't that long ago.

They were saying, Oh, Moses, go with God. We're behind you, buddy. We love you.

We're praying for you. Now it's like they're saying, what's wrong with you? Who sent you to represent us? What's going on here to remind her that it's not an easy thing to be a spiritual leader. When you're successful, everyone's going to be for you.

They're all going to say, Oh, we knew we could pull it off. I even gave him a little advice. Boy, he or she, they're doing a great job, aren't they? When you have a setback, it's amazing how quickly people will turn against you.

You know, I never felt right about that. What's wrong with that person? It's been said that success has a thousand fathers while failure is an orphan. When things are going well, everyone wants to believe that they were a part of it.

But when you have a setback, when you have some hardship, when you're facing obstacles, a lot of people will just bail. But good leaders will quickly learn that they have to find a course that is directed by God and they need to stay on that course, even if it is not the popular thing at that particular moment. So Moses reacted in the right way.

Look at verse 22. Moses returns to the Lord and said, Lord, why have you brought trouble on this people? Why is it that you have sent me? Now, I don't know that Moses is doubting God as much as he is probably doubting himself. When the Lord originally called him at the burning bush, Moses said, but Lord, Lord, Lord, Lord, I'm nervous in front of crowds.

I'm not the right guy, Lord. I have this speech impediment. I have the stammering lips.

You've got to get someone to go with me. And so God conceded to Moses weakness and allowed Aaron to go sort of as a spokesman. I think as you look at the bird's eye view of all the things that happened, it

probably would have been a better idea if Aaron had not gone along as we learn in our look at the worship of the golden cap that was basically initiated by Aaron.

But that's a whole nother story. But you see, Moses was saying, Lord, I told you I was going to let you down. I told you I was going to fail.

Lord, I'm not the right man for the job. We're all going to have doubts at times as to whether or not God has really called us. But when there is fruit galore and God is blessing, we say, oh, God is so good.

But when there's opposition and obstacles, sometimes we will question as to whether or not we're in the will of God. Now, it's not always a bad thing because sometimes things aren't going well because we're not in the will of God and we need to get in the will of God. But there are times when things are not going so well, but indeed you are in the very will of God and you must simply persist.

So here is the devil's opposition and Moses turns to God. Again, look at verse 22. Moses returned to the Lord.

That's what you need to do when people let you down, when circumstances overwhelm you, when you don't know what to do, turn to the Lord. As the psalmist said, when my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I look up. God, what do you want me to do? And I love God's response to his discouraged servant found there in chapter six, verses two to three.

God spoke to Moses and said to him, I am the Lord. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty. But by my name, the Lord, I was not known to them.

Interesting little passage here. The patriarchs knew God as God Almighty, taken from the Hebrew El Shaddai, which means the all sufficient and all powerful God. But God says, Moses, I'm making myself known to you in a different way.

I'm not just revealing to you as El Shaddai, but I'm revealing myself to you as Jehovah taken from the word Yahweh. We see a similar dynamic in the book of Genesis. We see different names used to describe God.

Now, each one is an accurate name, but each one describes a different facet of the character and nature of God. For instance, when we read that God is creating the heavens and the earth, the word Elohim is used. But then when you come to chapter two of Genesis and you see him working in the lives of his people, he is referred to as the Lord or Jehovah.

So you see he's Elohim when he is working with elements or non-believers and he's Jehovah when he's working with his people. So a simple way to look at it is Elohim is as far off name. Jehovah is his nearby name.

And this is sort of brought up when Satan tempted Eve in the garden. He says, why don't you go ahead and eat of this forbidden fruit for God using that word Elohim knows that in the day you eat thereof, you will be as a God knowing good and evil. Satan is suggesting by using that title that this God that you worship, he's powerful.

He's all sufficient, but he's distant. But no, God is saying to Moses, I am Jehovah. I want to enter into closeness with you.

Oh, the patriarchs knew me as else should I sure I was the all powerful, all sufficient one. But Moses, I am seeking a close relationship with you. I'm going to be there with you.

And in the same way, Jesus says to us, henceforth, I call you no longer servants, but friends for a servant does not know what his master is doing. But all things I have heard from my father, I have made known unto you. God desires intimacy with you and with me.

And so the Lord does not rebuke his friend Moses, but rather offers him some word of words of reassurance as he helps Moses to get things back in perspective again. See, a lot of times our problems seem overwhelming because we take our eyes off the Lord and we put our eyes on our problems. But when we pray, we get things into perspective again.

Oh yeah, right. I'm serving the creator of the universe and nothing is too hard for the Lord. So then I'm able to go out and face them again.

God was essentially saying, Moses, I'm not even warmed up yet. Okay. Now you stand back and watch what I'm going to do.

This is just the canvas that I'm going to paint my glory on. So Moses went and told the people all that God had told him, but they didn't buy it. And in chapter six, verse nine, two reasons are offered as to why they did not believe what Moses said.

Moses spoke to the children of Israel, but they did not heed Moses because of anguish of spirit and cruel bondage. Number one, they didn't respond because they were in anguish of spirit. That meant they were despondent or literally short of spirit.

They were worn out. They were spent. They were resentful that Moses had even shown up in the first place.

And secondly, they were in cruel bondage. In other words, they're actually holding Moses responsible. Here's the guy who's trying to get them out of the mess that they're in.

And because things don't go incredibly well, the first time out, they think he's a complete failure because it's worse now than it was before. So what does Moses do? Look at chapter six, verses 10 and 11. The Lord spoke to Moses saying, go and tell Pharaoh King of Egypt to let the children of Israel go out of this land.

In other words, God said, okay, Mo, don't worry about it. Forget about that. You just get back there and do what I told you to do.

So Moses storms right back into the court of Pharaoh to do it again. And this is a reminder to us that we need to be persistent when we believe something is the will of God. Just because that person you might be sharing the gospel with is not responding doesn't mean that you give up.

You go back to the Lord, you get things in perspective, and you try it again. And if that doesn't work, you try it again. And if that doesn't work, you try it again.

Why? Because I know that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. I know it is the will of God for that person to be saved. And when you look at the state of our country and you look how dark things have become, you pray.

And there are times you turn on the TV set and you say, I can't believe that's on. That is the worst thing I've ever seen. And then six months later, it's even worse.

And later than that, it's worse. You think how bad can it get? And you look at what's happening all around us and you say, how much worse can it get? We've got to pray for America and not give up. Just because we're opposed, just because we're not embraced, just because our views are not popular, doesn't mean we should go hide in some corner.

What we believe is right. The Bible is true. And therefore we must not be ashamed of it or its message or the worldview that we hold.

There's a result of followers of Christ that accepts scripture as the authority. So you get up and you try again. And that's what Moses did.

So much for my little tirade. Now, see, we're just family here on Wednesday nights, right? Turn to Exodus chapter seven. So Moses now goes in with Aaron to the court of Pharaoh.

It's time to pull out the big guns. It's miracle time. Verse 10, Moses and Aaron going to Pharaoh.

And they did so just as the Lord commanded. And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a serpent. But Pharaoh called the wise men and the sorcerers.

So the magicians of Egypt, they did in like manner with their enchantment. And every man threw down his rod and they became serpents. But Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods and Pharaoh's heart grew hard and he did not heed them as the Lord had said.

Interesting phrase here in verse 13. Let me just address it for a few moments. Pharaoh's heart grew hard.

Now, some people are confused by this statement because on one hand, we will read that Pharaoh hardened his heart. Then other times we'll read that the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart. And the implication of that latter statement could seem to be that God was sort of telling Pharaoh what he was going to do, i.e. hardening his heart.

And Pharaoh had no say as to whether he could have a soft heart or a hard heart. And that is simply not the case. Pharaoh hardened his heart.

The word that is used when it says God hardened Pharaoh's heart could be translated God strengthened or stiffened his heart. In other words, God was strengthening him in the decision he had already made. As we will see, Pharaoh began to harden his heart when Moses and Aaron performed this, the first of many miraculous signs.

Then we'll find later that he hardened his heart further when the magicians counterfeited the signs. He hardened it even when the magicians could not counterfeit the signs. It just got harder and harder.

The Lord gave to Pharaoh more than enough evidence to convince him that the gods of Egypt had no power at all. And the Lord God had all the power. And God was giving Pharaoh a chance to repent and cooperate.

I believe if Pharaoh would have said to Moses, you guys want to go? See ya. Thanks for helping out. That God's judgment would not have come upon Egypt.

This judgment came as a direct result of Pharaoh's disobedience. There would have been no plagues. God would have even perhaps blessed the great nation of Egypt.

For the scripture tells us he takes no delight in the death of the wicked. But on the other hand, as Pharaoh opposes him and refuses to obey the Lord, essentially even choosing God off, who is the Lord? Pharaoh says that I should obey him. Man, he was really painting himself into a corner.

You see, to turn from the truth is to become more and more entrenched in darkness. Pharaoh saw miracle after miracle and he heard the word of God and that brings responsibility. And that is where you can get a hardened heart.

You want to know the easiest place to get a hardened heart? It's in a place where you are exposed on a regular basis to the truth of God's word. You think the easiest place to get a hard heart maybe would be out in a bar or in some other place where ungodly things are done? No. The easiest place to get a hard heart would be to come to church every week and have no intention of applying what you hear.

Because you see when you're hanging out in some bar, I hope you know you're just in a pit. It's a dark place and you probably know it's a dark place and you know you're not walking with God and you're not pretending to walk with God. You're just being what you are.

But if you're coming to church and putting on sort of a pretense of belief and priding yourself in the fact that here you are attending church with your family but have no intention of applying it, the same sun that softens the wax will harden the clay. In other words, the same message that is liberating certain people and blessing them and refreshing them will actually drive you further and further into a state of hardness. And that's what was happening to Pharaoh.

The more he saw, the harder his heart became. How is your heart hardened? Listen, by continual exposure to the truth of the word of God and a refusal to obey and respond to it. Again, how is your heart hardened? By continual exposure to the word of God and a refusal to obey and respond to it.

You know it's true. Maybe you accept it intellectually, but you don't respond. So the man or the woman becomes hardened by the very truth that should have softened him.

He becomes judged by the very message that should have set him free. So God brings a series of plagues or judgments upon Egypt and upon Pharaoh to bring him to his senses. Ten plagues all together, each one gaining in intensity as Pharaoh's heart grew harder.

It included a plague of turning water to blood, frogs, lice, and much more. It's interesting to note, however, that there is a strategy to these judgments. In other words, each one of these plagues had a purpose.

They're not just sort of thrown out without rhyme or reason. God was responding directly to various gods of Egypt. And I say gods with a small g. The Egyptians worshipped many gods.

They had thousands of temples erected to millions of gods. And therefore, God directed these plagues or judgments against those false gods that Egypt worshipped, starting with the serpent. Notice that Moses' staff or rod becomes a serpent.

And what was the symbol of Egypt but that of the serpent, specifically the cobra, which was a symbol of immortality. So he throws a rod down and it becomes a serpent, presumably a cobra, showing God has

power over your snake, over your kingdom, over all that you have. But note Satan's bluff.

Very interesting. Chapter 7 verse 11, Pharaoh called the wise men and the sorcerers and the magicians of Egypt, and they did in like manner with their enchantments. In other words, they were able to duplicate this miracle.

Now the New Testament gives us the names of two of these magicians. 2nd Timothy 3.8 says, just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these men opposed the truth, men of depraved minds who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected. You see, Satan is an imitator.

He'll try to stop a work altogether, but if that does not succeed, he will then try to bring that work down through imitation. In doing so, he minimizes the power and glory of God. His objective is to neutralize the impact of our life and testimony.

See, Jannes and Jambres, two of the magicians, were like those described in scripture who have a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof. Remember, the objective of these two was to oppose the truth. And so they were trying to neutralize Moses and what he was trying to do.

And the objective of Satanic imitation is to divert us from the truth to get us to go after something else. Jesus told the parable of the wheat and tares. You remember that a man sowed a field of wheat and in the darkness of night, his neighbor came as an enemy and sowed tares among the wheat.

The tare is also known as the darnel seed. When it is initially planted next to the wheat, it looks just like wheat. If you didn't know better, you'd think it was wheat.

But after a period of time goes by, the darnel seed or the tare actually uproots the wheat. And in the same way, what Satan has done is he has flooded the market with cheap imitations. Here we have the genuine gospel message and we have all of the cheap imitations out there.

The false teachings with enough truth to make them interesting and attractive, but enough poison to destroy the person who buys into it. And as I look at some of these guys running around waving Bibles, a lot of them are on television. Seems like most of them are on television.

I'm sorry to say. I could see how a non-believer would reject Christianity. In all honesty, if I were a non-Christian and the only exposure I had to Christianity were these people that you see on TV, not all of them, but a good portion of them, I don't think I'd want to become a Christian.

Because I'd look at, first of all, they're very weird hairstyles. And it would frighten me. If I become a Christian, do I have to wear my hair like that? Do I have to dress like that? Do I have to sit in chairs that look like that? Do I have to behave this way? And you know, and they'll show these services and I think in some cases, some of these guys are tares among the wheat.

I mean, they'll wave a Bible and they'll quote a few verses and we'll say, I agree with that. I agree with that. I agree with that.

Whoa, hello, that's way off. Oh, but there's so many good things. And someone will say, well, I know that they're off in some areas, but you know, I like to just sort of chew up the fruit and spit out the seeds.

You better be careful because some of those seeds might get stuck in your throat and they might poison you because that's the whole thing. There's enough truth to make it appealing, but then you find blatant,

outright heresy undergirding it. Not just a little difference in opinion.

I mean, I know we can have that, but I'm talking about full-blown heresy in some cases. We have to be very, very careful, but this is the devil's objective. He puts all this weirdness out there and all of these false professors out there.

And then the non-believer can say, well, that person's a lunatic. This person over here is weird. This person acts strange and they're a Christian, aren't they? And therefore they say, I don't believe in any of it.

See, it's a good strategy, isn't it? And that is why it's so important that they can see the real thing. That's where you come in. You're the real thing.

So you are our best defense against the tears that are sown among the wheat. Normal Christians, and I use that in a positive sense, living a godly life, just going out there and living for the Lord, sharing the gospel, loving the Lord, showing compassion. You are the one that is going to counteract that.

They'll say, these people are weird, but then there's that one person that's my neighbor. And you know, they're really a great guy or a great girl or that co-worker or that fellow student. But you see, this is how Satan works.

He sows the tears among the wheat and also notice that they were able to replicate the miracle. Now, was this actually a duplication of the miracle or was it mere trickery, slight of hand? I was drugged somewhat against my will to see a magician a couple of months ago. And by a magician, I just mean a guy that does tricks, you know, pulling rabbits out of hats, that sort of thing.

I didn't want to go. And I have to say, this guy was pretty good. He did some really amazing illusions.

And he came right up and said, these are illusions and this is all slight of hand. And that's what it was. But some of them were so convincing.

And in the same way, maybe these magicians were just a little slight of hand. Maybe they had a snake up their sleeve, you know, that they dropped down at the opportune moment. But then again, it may have been that they were doing actual devilish miracles.

You need to know that God is not the only one who can perform miracles. Did you know that? Satan can do miracles too. We see that evidenced here in this story, if they were indeed doing satanic miracles.

And certainly the Bible tells us in the last days that the Antichrist will be able to deceive people by lying wonders, you see. So it may have been satanic miracles, whatever the case, they were an imitation to neutralize the true miracle of God. So Pharaoh doesn't buy this in spite of the fact that though his magicians are able to produce a snake from a rod as well.

It just so happens that Moses rod that became a snake swallows Pharaoh's rod that became a snake and Pharaoh seemed to miss that. So now we're going to get a little more intense. We come to plague number one, the Nile river turns to blood.

Look at chapter seven, starting in verse 19. Then the Lord spoke to Moses, say to Aaron, take your rod, stretch it out of your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their streams, over their rivers, over their ponds, over all their pools of water, that there may become blood. And there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in buckets of wood and pitchers of stone.

And Moses and Aaron did so just as the Lord commanded. He lifted up the rod and he struck the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, in the sight of his servants. And all the waters that were in the river turned to blood.

Verse 21, the fish that were in the river, the river stank and the Egyptians could not drink the water of the river. So there was blood throughout the land of Egypt. Then the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments and Pharaoh's heart grew hard.

He did not heed them as the Lord had said, and Pharaoh turned and went to his house. Neither was his heart moved by this. Stop there.

The Nile River was regarded as a God to the ancient Egyptians. They believe that the God of the Nile was known as Hapai or Isis was the goddess of the Nile. So here was a God that they worship.

They believe this river was an actual God, a spiritual force. And not only that, but to every Egyptian, the Nile River was basic to life itself because well water in that time would often be contaminated. So the Egyptian depended on the Nile for all of their water needs that would include water for bathing, for cooking, for cleaning laundry, and of course drinking.

And so God strikes the Nile and that's striking at the very heart of Egypt to show that their so-called God had no power to help them. But Pharaoh's magicians were able to duplicate this miracle too. Now what's interesting about this is it would have been more impressive if they could have turned the bloody Nile back into clear water, not take what little clear water was left and turn it to in the blood.

You know, see whoever said sin made sense. Oh, we can do that too. Oh, thanks guys.

We have a little water left and now it's blood. But they're essentially saying, look, we can do this. This is just doesn't mean anything.

And so again, Pharaoh hardens his heart. Plague number two, an invasion of frogs. God tells Moses to go back to Pharaoh, demand the release of the Israelites or Egypt will be covered wall to wall in frogs.

Once again, Pharaoh refuses to budge. Drop down to chapter eight. Let's read verses five to seven.

The Lord speaks to Moses, say to Aaron, stretch out your hand with your rod over the streams, the rivers, the ponds and cause frogs to come up on the land of Egypt. So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt and frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. And the magicians did so with their enchantments and brought up frogs on the land of Egypt.

Believe it or not, even the frog was a God to the Egyptians. Their deity, Hegat, the goddess of the resurrection, fertility and childbirth had the head of a frog. God said, Hey, you guys like to worship the frog.

I've got frogs for you. Worship away. There's a frog for everyone.

And the Bible tells us in the more descriptive part of these verses that there were frogs in their bed. There were frogs in their oven. There were frogs everywhere.

Can you imagine this? I mean, I don't know about you, but frogs grossed me out just a little bit. I mean, I like to look at them, but I hate to step on them. Have you ever stepped on a frog barefoot? I have.

That's because I used to live in Hawaii. And in Hawaii, there's lots and lots of frogs. And it rains all the time over there.

And when I was a little boy living over there in the early sixties, I remember a big rainstorm would come and the frogs would just come out of the woodwork. And so you'd be walking home at night barefoot because you do that in Hawaii. And all of a sudden you step on something slimy and squishy.

You know, and there were just frogs everywhere. In fact, what would happen is when it would rain, all the frogs would come out into the streets and then they would be in the middle of the street and the sun would come out because as quickly as it rains in Hawaii, the sun comes out. So here are these poor frogs in the sun and the cars would run them over and they'd all be laying out in the street like this, you know.

So we'd pick up their frog carcasses and throw them like little frisbees. They were only good for one throw. That's a problem.

But I hate frogs. This one would have brought me around. I mean, you know, you go into the oven and I'm going to be, oh, there's a frog.

You go to bed. Good night, honey rabbit. Oh, I would have broken down.

I would have said, I repent. You can have the Israelites. You can have whatever you want.

But Pharaoh did not give in. And interestingly, his magicians were able to copy this miracle too. But this one was starting to catch Pharaoh's attention.

It was starting to bother him. And he said, okay, listen, all right, all right. If, if you will just call on your God and make all these frogs go away, I'll release the Israelites.

And so Moses and Aaron called on the Lord and the frogs died like the Bible's description that says the land stank. That's a good description. It stank.

A bunch of frog carcasses. But of course, Pharaoh did not change. When he saw there was relief, Exodus 8, 15 says he hardened his heart.

He did not heed them as the Lord had said. Isn't this typical of so many non-believers today? The call on God to get them out of some mess that they've gotten themselves into some crisis that has come as a result of their own sin. And they'll make great and lofty promises as to what they will do in return when God comes through for them and intervenes and so forth.

They won't go back to their old ways, they say, but then God comes through and they go back and do it again. I read about a hospital chaplain. I kept a record of 2000 of his patients that he had visited all apparently in a dying condition who showed various signs of repentance.

But this doctor recorded that among those who had been restored to health, he felt that only two showed a marked change in their spiritual lives after their recovery. In other words, out of 2000 people that apparently repented when they thought they were going to die, only two stuck with it than when they were restored to health. So much for repentance.

And a lot of people will repent when they have to. The marriage is falling apart. The bottom of their career is dropped out.

They're reaping the consequences of sins that they have sown for months, perhaps even years. Oh God, help me. Oh God, I'm sorry.

Oh God, get me out of this. And God graciously, amazingly comes through. And how do so many people repay the Lord? They go back to their old rebellious ways.

Plague number four, gnats all folks. Gnats fall on the people of Egypt. A plague of lice or gnats come over everyone and every animal as well.

Interestingly, God produced these gnats from the dust of the desert. And that too was directed against a God of Egypt because they worshipped the God of the desert, the God known as Set, S-E-T. And it's interesting to notice that this third plague came without warning.

You know, sometimes God will let us know what's coming down. Say, now, if you don't repent, I'm going to judge you. If you don't do something about this, I'm going to bring my judgment on you.

Boy, he warned the Israelites for years to the prophets. And if they did not repent, another nation would overtake them and carry them away into captivity. Well, they didn't repent.

And one day, sure enough, the Babylonians rolled in and pulled the Israelites into that captivity. He warned them. There are times in our life, God will warn us.

We start to cross the line. There'll be the warning. Don't do that.

That's a sin. You shouldn't do that. He'll warn you.

Don't do that. Don't do that. But you do it.

You do it. You do it. He warned you.

He warned you. And then sometimes it's just kapow. He nails you.

He doesn't give you a warning. This is what was happening to Pharaoh. No more warnings.

After the plague of frogs, and he didn't really repent. In fact, it was a false profession of repentance. God just brings on the gnats.

It was a surprise attack. Now, these gnats or lice are a description of a biting, stinging insect that penetrates the nostrils and ears of its victims. I remember years ago, another Hawaii story here.

This was after I was an adult and we were over ministering in Hawaii. I want to say that so you don't just think I hang out in Hawaii all the time. And we were over in the island of Kauai, and we were told that there was a certain place we could go to where they filmed the Raiders of the Lost Ark, the first film of the scene where Indiana Jones is in some kind of a temple.

And he takes this little image and he's running with it. And there he's being chased by the natives and they're firing arrows. And he climbs into his little seaplane and gets away.

You know, I heard we could go see that place. I thought, oh, that's great. So we go to the place where it's happening.

And sure enough, it looked just like the movie. And all of a sudden, out of nowhere, this swarm of biting, stinging insects descend upon us. And we are running, screaming, looking for some water.

It's almost like the movie, you know. Except we weren't being chased by natives. We were being chased by bugs.

And they were biting. And it's horrible. And just multiply them many times over.

And this is what was happening. And this was especially hard for the Egyptians, because they happened to be fanatical about cleanliness. Their priests would frequently wash and shave their bodies to be acceptable to their various gods.

And here they were, invaded by these stinking gnats, biting and stinging them. Now, I want you to also note that these plagues were getting progressively worse. Consider this.

The plague on the Nile was a blow to everyone. But people appear to have adapted and were getting by. The frogs were a horrible nuisance.

And people were sickened by them. But I don't know that anyone was specifically harmed by them. But with these gnats, it was now becoming really unbearable.

And interestingly, Pharaoh's magicians could not duplicate this one. They couldn't do this one. Exodus 8, 19 says, The magician said to Pharaoh, This is the finger of God.

But Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, just as the Lord had said. Now, you would think that up to this point, maybe Pharaoh could have rationalized his hardened heart by saying, Well, my magicians can duplicate your miracles. Why should I believe? But now even his magicians come and say, Pharaoh, we can't pull this off.

This is the finger of God. And still his heart is getting harder. And this is a reminder that Satan is an imitator.

That Satan can duplicate certain things that God can do, but he is nowhere near to being the equal of God. Some people falsely think that just as there is this all-powerful God in heaven, there is also this all-powerful devil in hell. And whatever God can do, the devil can do.

And that is simply not true. For instance, Satan is not omnipotent, meaning all-powerful. God has unlimited power.

There is nothing the Lord cannot do, but Satan has clear limitations to what he can do. Satan is not omniscient, all-knowing. In contrast to the Lord that knows everything about everyone, all the time, Satan's knowledge is limited.

Now, granted he has a powerful intellect, from experience knows many things, far more than any person, but he is limited there. Satan is not omnipresent, present everywhere. God is everywhere at the same time.

Satan can only be in one place at one time. So if he's here tonight, I hope he isn't. But if he were, he can't be in Los Angeles.

And if he's in Los Angeles, he can't be in New York. And if he's in New York, he can't be in Beijing or wherever he happens to be. So when we say, oh, the devil was really tempting me today, it's doubtful it was the devil himself.

And I don't want to make you feel bad, but I doubt most of us are a big enough fish for the devil to personally come and tempt, though it's possible. But certainly it was one of his well-organized demon powers doing his bidding. So in effect, the devil tempted you.

It's not wrong to say Satan's hassling me, because it's one of his minions that's doing the dirty work. But my point is, Satan himself can only be in one place at one time. So he's limited.

We see that from his story. But there's another interesting thing about this third plague, because God intervenes in an amazing way for his people. From the fourth plague on, the land of Goshen, where the Israelites lived, had an invisible shield put around it.

And from then on, God protected the Israelites, his people, from the successive plagues that hit Egypt. So no matter what was happening in Egypt, everything was fine in Israel. Interesting, isn't it? I remember once we were down in Oceanside, a bunch of us were riding our Harleys, and Raul Reis was there, and Steve Wilburn was there, and some others.

Rick Schutte, I think, one of our pastors. And we're here at this Harley dealership in Oceanside, and all of a sudden, this torrential rain comes. It is raining like cats and dogs, and it's just horrific.

And so we're standing there, what do we do? And these guys said, well, let's just wait for the rain to pass. I said, we could be here all day, and our bikes are getting drenched, and I hate to ride in the rain. I said, I'm riding out of here.

They said, don't do it. Don't do it. I said, I think that there's no rain, like, just five minutes from here.

I think I can see the sun. Don't do it, they say. I said, you guys are crazy.

You sit in the rain. I jump in my bike. I take off.

I'm telling you, six minutes later, I am in blazing sunshine. So they stayed in the rain. Let them get wet.

That's their problem. I should have listened to the pastor, you know. And that's sort of the scene before us here.

Here are all of these plagues coming upon Egypt. Sorry to use my pastors in that particular illustration, but all the plagues are coming upon Egypt. And here are the Israelites over there in Goshen, sun shining, birds are singing, sky is blue.

They're having a great old time. But all hell is breaking loose in Egypt. But God protects His people, doesn't He? And as Psalm 91 says, a thousand will fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand.

But it will not come near you. Only with your eyes shall you look and see the reward of the wicked. Plague number four, insect invasion.

Verse 24 of chapter eight, the Lord sent thick swarms of flies into the house of Pharaoh and his servants' houses and all the land of Egypt. The land was corrupted because of the swarm of flies. It was a massive

mixture of bugs, flying beetles, spiders, ticks.

I mean, it's just a bunch of creepy, crawly bugs. That would have creeped me out big time. I mean, definitely I would have repented.

And this is starting to wear Pharaoh down. He realizes he's outgunned, but he doesn't give up so easily. So he changes his strategy.

And this brings us to the theme I introduced in the beginning as we bring this message to a close. The devil wants to bring us down through compromise. And that's how Pharaoh tried to bring Moses down as well.

Look at chapter eight of Exodus, read verse 25, down to verse 32. Pharaoh calls for Moses and Aaron and says, all right, go sacrifice to your God in the land. Moses said, it's not right to do so, for we would be sacrificing the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord, our God.

If we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, will they not stone us? No, we need to go three days into the wilderness and sacrifice to the Lord, our God, as he will command us. Note verse 28, Pharaoh said, I will let you go that you may sacrifice to the Lord, your God in the wilderness. Only you shall not go very far away, intercede for me.

So first Pharaoh says, okay, you know, if you have to go worship your God, offer a sacrifice, dude, just do it here in Egypt. I give you permission. Moses says, we can't do that.

The Egyptians see us offering the sacrifice to God, they'll kill us. Okay. Okay.

If you have to go, go, but just don't go very far away. Notice the pattern here for here is the anatomy of a compromise. Verse 25, go sacrifice in the land, but what did God tell him to do? Go three days into the wilderness.

You see, Satan will try to give a small concession. Oh, I mean, he would love you to just backslide tonight. Okay.

I mean, if you are stupid enough to do that, he'd love it. If he could just whisper in your ear, Hey, you happy Christian. Yeah.

You, the one that's been transformed by the power of God. I was thinking, why don't you blow your brains out tonight? Oh, sounds good to me. Yeah.

Oh, he'd love that. Hey, why don't you just abandon your wife or your husband, your children, and just go out and do whatever you want. Yeah.

Okay. No, you know, most people aren't that stupid. So Satan's clever.

He'll come to them and say, no, I know you're a family man. I know you love your wife or your husband, but you know, a little pornography spice up your life. Huh? Maybe you ought to just dabble in it.

Make your marriage better. You know, your relationship with your spouse. Go ahead and just play with it a little bit, or go ahead and look at it just a little bit.

It's not going to hurt you. Besides you need to be educated about these things. You need to know about them.

So if someone asked you, you can give them an answer. Hey, why don't you go out and just have a drink? I mean, come on, you're not going to get drunk, you know, just what's wrong with, with one glass of wine, just a beer here. Surely God's going to understand.

That's okay. Oh, come on. You can tell a little lie here.

Besides the ends justify the means. It's a good thing. A little fib, a little white lie wouldn't hurt anybody.

It's these little thoughts that come to us and we say, well, it's not so bad. It's certainly not as bad as that person over there. Well, you know, you can always rationalize something, but it's the little things that turn into big things, right? And you look at any time in your life where you've fallen into any kind of sin.

And I guarantee in every instance, if you'll go back and retrace your steps, you'll find it started with a little bit of compromise. Is that true? A little bit of compromise. And so that's all Pharaoh's trying to do.

He doesn't tell him his end game. Hey, Moses, I'm just kill you. Go on the wilderness.

I kill you there. No. Okay.

Do it in the land. We can't do that. We have to leave the land.

All right. Just don't go very far. And I love this.

He even says, intercede for me, Moses, pray for me. Oh, I've seen this ploy played out. You know, maybe there's some attractive Christian girl or good looking Christian guy, and they're not finding anybody in the church to get involved with in a relationship.

And so they started looking out in the world and well, maybe I'll date this non-believer and I'm just going to win him to Christ. You know, oh man, famous last words. You know, that guy asked you out for a date.

He's not a Christian. You say, well, I'm a Christian. Oh, really? Are you a Christian? Oh yes.

I, I'm a Christian. In fact, I really need to be involved with you. In fact, pray for me.

Would you pray for me? Oh yeah, sure. You know, he's just pulling you into his web, get what he wants from you. And that's all Satan is trying to do.

That's all Pharaoh was trying to do. Go ahead and pray for me. Don't go too far.

See how subtle it is. It's not a complete denial of what you know is right. It's a compromise.

First he's trying to get Moses to stay there. Then he says, don't go too far. If he could not keep them in Egypt, he would at least like to keep them near it.

So they would still be under its influence because in this way it would be easier to reel them back again and their witness would be ineffective. And so he wants to keep you close. So Satan will say, all right, if you have to be a Christian, I hate the idea, but fine, go ahead.

But it's still okay to have a little fun and dabble with the world and just stay close to me. Come on, don't go too far. That's exactly the ploy that Pharaoh is trying.

And after this, more plagues come. Plague five, six, and seven. Pestilence on the livestock, boils on everyone, followed by severe hail.

It was so bad that even Pharaoh's magicians were afflicted and taken out of the picture. Exodus 9.11 says, the magicians could not stand before Moses because of their boils, for the boils were on the magicians and on all of the Egyptians. Finally, Pharaoh is cracking.

The hail was too much. Look at chapter 10. And we'll read verses 8 to 11.

So Moses and Aaron were brought again to Pharaoh and he said to them, go serve the Lord your God. By the way, who are the ones that are going? Moses said, well, we're going to go with our young and our old, with our sons and our daughters, with our flocks and our herds, and we will go and hold a feast unto the Lord. Then he said, the Lord better be with you when I let you and your little ones go.

Beware for evil is ahead of you. So now Pharaoh says, all right, go get out of here. But you know what? You can't take the kids.

Better leave the kids with me. Oh, isn't that typical of Satan? He wants our kids. Did you know that? Oh, generation after generation of young people buys into that same old lie of sex, drugs, and rock and roll.

I thought we discovered that, but you see, it just gets played out. And this is an amazing how each generation buys into it. Oh yeah.

You know, and they're into the latest ban and the drugs and the parties and the illicit sex. It does seem to get a little worse each time, at least a little more blatant and out front, but it's the same lie as Satan takes generation after generation down the wrong path. He wants our kids.

And that's why we just say you can't have them. That's why in our ministry, we're always reaching out to young people and we're going to find ways to reach them. And we're never going to compromise our message.

We're not going to compromise what we're saying, but we're going to stay in tune with our culture. We're going to speak in the language that they speak, and we're going to grab them for Christ and try to build them up in the faith. We're not going to give them up.

And if the Lord tarries and I'm standing up here and I'm 80, I hope I'm still saying the same thing. Gotta get the kids. Can't let them go.

Pharaoh warns them, man, God better be with you if you try to do that. And so now we find that Pharaoh realizes that he doesn't have any cards left to play. Verse 10 or verse 24, excuse me, chapter 10, Pharaoh calls to Moses and says, all right, go serve the Lord.

Only let your flocks and your herds be kept back. Let the little ones go with you. Now put yourself in Moses' sandals for a moment.

Let's just say that you'd come this far. Think about this. On the first pass, Pharaoh says, not only am I not going to release the Israelites, I'm going to make their work harder.

And God brings all these plagues against Egypt and he's softening and he's giving in. And now finally he says, go ahead and go and just leave your animals. Don't you think at that point you would be tempted to say, this is a good deal.

Have you ever negotiated with someone, you know, on a price and you have your bottom life price, but can't pay more than this, you say. So you make mental note to self, dear self, don't offer more than this bottom life price, but you're going and they start the negotiation. And next thing you know, you agree to something you can't really afford.

And doesn't it drive you crazy when you walk away saying, well, I still got a pretty good deal. And then you find someone that just got what you got for a cheaper price. He thought I should have held out.

I gave in too soon. This is negotiation. Pharaoh said, all right, take your kids, leave your animals.

I mean, you might say, animals, who cares about them? All right, fine, kids, let's go. We're out of here. The Pharaoh has released us.

You know, let's go everyone together. You can do miracles when you believe that was from Prince of Egypt. Forget it.

That's what they sang when they left Egypt from the cartoon movie. Remember? Okay. But I love what Moses says, and I don't want you to miss it.

He says in verse 26, not a hoof will be left behind. Why was Moses so nitpicky? Because God said you and your children and your livestock and your possessions are going to leave Egypt. Therefore, that meant that Moses and the people and the livestock and the children and their possessions were going to leave Egypt.

He was saying, Pharaoh, you don't get anything. Why should we negotiate with you? We know where your heart's at. You're corrupt.

You're wicked. You want to destroy us. And this is evidenced by later on when they come to the brink of the Red Sea and the Egyptian army comes into slaughter.

Of course, God turned it back on the Egyptians and destroyed the army and delivered the Israelites. But the point is, don't work out deals with the devil, because whatever that deal is, it's only ultimately going to lead to your undoing. So when Satan comes, all right, you can go ahead and believe in Jesus and go to church and read the Bible.

But let me just have this one little area of your life. Okay, just that's it. Just that.

Nothing else. You say, okay, I'm doing well with the Lord, but there's this one little thing. I know it's not right before God.

I know it's just it. No, no, no one little thing. You see what I'm saying? You have to say like Moses, not a hoof will be left behind.

And you need to say to the enemy, you get zero zip nada. You don't get anything, nothing. I've seen what you've done to me.

I've seen your agenda. I give you nothing and make a clean break. It's the danger of the compromise life.

So maybe you've gotten yourself into a compromised state. Maybe you're in one right now. What you need to do is change it.

If you're in a situation you should not be in, get out of it. If you're in a relationship, you should not be in. If possible, get out of it.

I had that qualification because maybe you married a non-believer. You can just say, well, Greg just told me it's okay to divorce my non-believing husband. No, I didn't tell you that because the Bible tells you to stay with him and try to win him or her to Christ depending on your circumstances.

But if possible, get out of that relationship. If you're in some lifestyle that she knows a compromise, stop being in that lifestyle, repent and make a break. And in the future, no more deals for the devil, no more compromises, no more small things like Moses.

You say not a hoof will be left behind. You've been listening to Pastor Greg Laurie's presentation called the danger of a compromised life. This is just one of many study messages and other resources available through Harvest Ministries.

For information on these spiritual growth tools, write us at A New Beginning, Box 4424, Riverside, CA 92514 or phone 1-800-821-3300. You can find out more about Greg Laurie's ministry by visiting the Harvest Crusades website on the internet at [www.harvest.org](http://www.harvest.org). Thanks for listening.

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