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EXODUS 9:1 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh, and tell him, 'This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: "Let my people go, that they may serve me.

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The Lord sends Moses to Pharaoh to inform him that, if he did not let the Israelites depart, a destructive pestilence should be sent among his cattle, Exo 9:1-3; while the cattle of the Israelites should be preserved, Exo 9:4. The next day this pestilence, which was the fifth plague, is sent, and all the cattle of the Egyptians die, Exo 9:5, Exo 9:6. Though Pharaoh finds that not one of the cattle of the Israelites had died, yet, through hardness of heart, he refuses to let the people go, Exo 9:7. Moses and Aaron are commanded to sprinkle handfuls of ashes from the furnace, that the sixth plague, that of boils and blains, might come on man and beast, Exo 9:8, Exo 9:9; which having done, the plague takes place, Exo 9:10. The magicians cannot stand before this plague, which they can neither imitate nor remove, Exo 9:11. Pharaoh's heart is again hardened, Exo 9:12. God's awful message to Pharaoh, with the threat of more severe plagues than before, Exo 9:13-17. The seventh plague of rain, hail, and fire threatened, Exo 9:18. The Egyptians commanded to house their cattle that they might not be destroyed, Exo 9:19. These who feared the word of the Lord brought home their servants and cattle, and those who did not regard that word left their cattle and servants in the fields, Exo 9:20, Exo 9:21. The storm of hail, thunder, and lightning takes place, Exo 9:22-24. It nearly desolates the whole land of Egypt, Exo 9:25, while the land of Goshen escapes, Exo 9:26. Pharaoh confesses his sin, and begs an interest in the prayers of Moses and Aaron, Exo 9:27, Exo 9:28. Moses promises to intercede for him, and while he promises that the storm shall cease, he foretells the continuing obstinacy of both himself and his servants, Exo 9:29, Exo 9:30. The flax and barley, being in a state of maturity, are destroyed by the tempest, Exo 9:31; while the wheat and the rye, not being grown up, are preserved, Exo 9:32. Moses obtains a cessation of the storm, Exo 9:33. Pharaoh and his servants, seeing this, harden their hearts, and refuse to let the people go, Exo 9:34, Exo 9:35.

#### Verse 1

The Lord God of the Hebrews - It is very likely that the term Lord, ייִה Yehovah, is used here to point out particularly his eternal power and Godhead; and that the term God, אלהי Elohey, is intended to be understood in the sense of Supporter, Defender, Protector, etc. Thus saith the self-existent, omnipotent, and eternal Being, the Supporter and Defender of the Hebrews, "Let my people go, that they may worship me."

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EXODUS 9:2 For if you refuse to let them go, and hold them still,

EXODUS 9:3 behold, the hand of the LORD is on your livestock which are in the field, on the horses, on the donkeys, on the camels, on the herds, and on the flocks with a very grievous pestilence.

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#### Verse 3

The hand of the Lord - The power of God manifested in judgment.

Upon the horses - ד'סוֹסוֹ susim. This is the first place the horse is mentioned; a creature for which Egypt and Arabia were always famous. סוֹס sus is supposed to have the same meaning with שש sas, which signifies to be active, brisk, or lively, all which are proper appellatives of the horse, especially

in Arabia and Egypt. Because of their activity and swiftness they were sacrificed and dedicated to the sun, and perhaps it was principally on this account that God prohibited the use of them among the Israelites.

A very grievous murrain - The murrain is a very contagious disease among cattle, the symptoms of which are a hanging down and swelling of the head, abundance of gum in the eyes, rattling in the throat, difficulty of breathing, palpitation of the heart, staggering, a hot breath, and a shining tongue; which symptoms prove that a general inflammation has taken place. The original word דבר deber is variously translated. The Septuagint have θανατος, death; the Vulgate has pestis, a plague or pestilence; the old Saxon version, to die, any fatal disease. Our English word murrain comes either from the French mourir, to die, or from the Greek μαραινω maraino, to grow lean, waste away. The term mortality would be the nearest in sense to the original, as no particular disorder is specified by the Hebrew word.

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EXODUS 9:4 The LORD will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt; and nothing shall die of all that belongs to the children of Israel.”””

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#### Verse 4

The Lord shall sever - See Clarke on Exo 8:22 (note).

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EXODUS 9:5 The LORD appointed a set time, saying, “Tomorrow the LORD shall do this thing in the land.”

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#### Verse 5

To-morrow the Lord shall do this - By thus foretelling the evil, he showed his prescience and power; and from this both the Egyptians and Hebrews must see that the mortality that ensued was no casualty, but the effect of a predetermined purpose in the Divine justice.

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EXODUS 9:6 The LORD did that thing on the next day; and all the livestock of Egypt died, but of the livestock of the children of Israel, not one died.

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#### Verse 6

All the cattle of Egypt died - That is, All the cattle that did die belonged to the Egyptians, but not one died that belonged to the Israelites, Exo 9:4, Exo 9:6. That the whole stock of cattle belonging to the Egyptians did not die we have the fullest proof, because there were cattle both to be killed and saved alive in the ensuing plague, Exo 9:19-25. By this judgment the Egyptians must see the vanity of the whole of their national worship, when they found the animals which they not only held sacred but deified, slain without distinction among the common herd, by a pestilence sent from the hand of Jehovah. One might naturally suppose that after this the animal worship of the Egyptians could never more maintain its ground.

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EXODUS 9:7 Pharaoh sent, and, behold, there was not so much as one of the livestock of the Israelites dead. But the heart of Pharaoh was stubborn, and he didn't let the people go.

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Verse 7

And Pharaoh sent, etc. - Finding so many of his own cattle and those of his subjects slain, he sent to see whether the mortality had reached to the cattle of the Israelites, that he might know whether this were a judgment inflicted by their God, and probably designing to replace the lost cattle of the Egyptians with those of the Israelites.

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EXODUS 9:8 The LORD said to Moses and to Aaron, "Take to you handfuls of ashes of the furnace, and let Moses sprinkle it toward the sky in the sight of Pharaoh.

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Verse 8

Handfuls of ashes of the furnace - As one part of the oppression of the Israelites consisted in their labor in the brick-kilns, some have observed a congruity between the crime and the punishment. The furnaces, in the labor of which they oppressed the Hebrews, now yielded the instruments of their punishment; for every particle of those ashes, formed by unjust and oppressive labor, seemed to be a boil or a blain on the tyrannical king and his cruel and hard-hearted people.

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EXODUS 9:9 It shall become small dust over all the land of Egypt, and shall be a boil breaking out with boils on man and on animal, throughout all the land of Egypt."

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Verse 9

Shall be a boil - שֶׁחִין shechin. This word is generally expounded, an inflammatory swelling, a burning boil; one of the most poignant afflictions, not immediately mortal, that can well affect the surface of the human body. If a single boil on any part of the body throws the whole system into a fever, what anguish must a multitude of them on the body at the same time occasion!

Breaking forth with blains - אַבְעוּת ababuoth, supposed to come from בָּעָה baah, to swell, bulge out; any inflammatory swelling, node, or pustule, in any part of the body, but more especially in the more glandular parts, the neck, arm-pits, groin, etc. The Septuagint translate it thus: Καὶ ἔσται ἑλκὴ φλυκτιδὲς ἀναζευσοῦσαι. And it shall be an ulcer with burning pustules. It seems to have been a disorder of an uncommon kind, and hence it is called by way of distinction, the botch of Egypt, Deu 28:27, perhaps never known before in that or any other country. Orosius says that in the sixth plague "all the people were blistered, that the blisters burst with tormenting pain, and that worms issued out of them." Alfred's Oros., lib. i., c. vii.

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EXODUS 9:10 They took ashes of the furnace, and stood before Pharaoh; and Moses sprinkled it up toward the sky; and it became a boil breaking out with boils on man and on animal.

EXODUS 9:11 The magicians couldn't stand before Moses because of the boils; for the boils were on the magicians, and on all the Egyptians.

#### Verse 11

The boil was upon the magicians - They could not produce a similar malady by throwing ashes in the air; and they could neither remove the plague from the people, nor from their own tormented flesh. Whether they perished in this plague we know not, but they are no more mentioned. If they were not destroyed by this awful judgment, they at least left the field, and no longer contended with these messengers of God. The triumph of God's power was now complete, and both the Hebrews and the Egyptians must see that there was neither might, nor wisdom, nor counsel against the Lord; and that, as universal nature acknowledged his power, devils and men must fail before him.

EXODUS 9:12 The LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he didn't listen to them, as the LORD had spoken to Moses.

EXODUS 9:13 The LORD said to Moses, "Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, and tell him, 'This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: "Let my people go, that they may serve me.

EXODUS 9:14 For this time I will send all my plagues against your heart, against your officials, and against your people; that you may know that there is no one like me in all the earth.

EXODUS 9:15 For now I would have stretched out my hand, and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth;

#### Verse 15

For now I will stretch out my hand - In the Hebrew the verbs are in the past tense, and not in the future, as our translation improperly expresses them, by which means a contradiction appears in the text: for neither Pharaoh nor his people were smitten by a pestilence, nor was he by any kind of mortality cut off from the earth. It is true the first-born were slain by a destroying angel, and Pharaoh himself was drowned in the Red Sea; but these judgments do not appear to be referred to in this place. If the words be translated, as they ought, in the subjunctive mood, or in the past instead of the future, this seeming contradiction to facts, as well as all ambiguity, will be avoided: For if now I Had Stretched Out (שלהתי shalachtî, had set forth) my hand, and had smitten thee (ואך אותך vaach othecha) and thy people with the pestilence, thou Shouldst Have Been cut off (תכחד ticchached) from the earth.

EXODUS 9:16 but indeed for this cause I have made you stand: to show you my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth;

## Verse 16

But truly, on this very account, have I caused thee to subsist - (העמדתיך heemadticha), that I might cause thee to see my power, (הראתך את כחי harotheca eth cochi), and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth, (or, בכל הארץ becol haarets, in all this land). See Ainsworth and Houbigant.

Thus God gave this impious king to know that it was in consequence of his especial providence that both he and his people had not been already destroyed by means of the past plagues; but God had preserved him for this very purpose, that he might have a farther opportunity of manifesting that he, Jehovah, was the only true God for the full conviction both of the Hebrews and Egyptians, that the former might follow and the latter fear before him. Judicious critics of almost all creeds have agreed to translate the original as above, a translation which it not only can bear but requires, and which is in strict conformity to both the Septuagint and Targum. Neither the Hebrew העמדתיך heemadticha, I have caused thee to stand; nor the apostle's translation of it, Rom 9:17, ἐξηγείρα σε, I have raised thee; nor that of the Septuagint, ἐνεκεν τούτου διετηρήθης, on this account art thou preserved, viz., in the past plagues; can countenance that most exceptionable meaning put on the words by certain commentators, viz., "That God ordained or appointed Pharaoh from all eternity, by certain means, to this end; that he made him to exist in time; that he raised him to the throne; promoted him to that high honor and dignity; that he preserved him, and did not cut him off as yet; that he strengthened and hardened his heart; irritated, provoked, and stirred him up against his people Israel, and suffered him to go all the lengths he did go in his obstinacy and rebellion; all which was done to show in him his power in destroying him in the Red Sea. The sum of which is, that this man was raised up by God in every sense for God to show his power in his destruction." So man speaks; thus God hath not spoken. See Henry on the place.

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EXODUS 9:17 as you still exalt yourself against my people, that you won't let them go.

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## Verse 17

As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people - So it appears that at this time he might have submitted, and thus prevented his own destruction.

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EXODUS 9:18 Behold, tomorrow about this time I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as has not been in Egypt since the day it was founded even until now.

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## Verse 18

To-morrow about this time - The time of this plague is marked thus circumstantially to show Pharaoh that Jehovah was Lord of heaven and earth, and that the water, the fire, the earth, and the air, which were all objects of Egyptian idolatry, were the creatures of his power; and subservient to his will; and that, far from being able to help them, they were now, in the hands of God, instruments of their destruction.

To rain a very grievous hail - To rain hail may appear to some superficial observers as an unphilosophical mode of expression, but nothing can be more correct. "Drops of rain falling through

a cold region of the atmosphere are frozen and converted into hail;" and thus the hail is produced by rain. When it begins to fall it is rain; when it is falling it is converted into hail; thus it is literally true that it rains hail. The farther a hail-stone falls the larger it generally is, because in its descent it meets with innumerable particles of water, which, becoming attached to it, are also frozen, and thus its bulk is continually increasing till it reaches the earth. In the case in question, if natural means were at all used, we may suppose a highly electrified state of an atmosphere loaded with vapors, which, becoming condensed and frozen, and having a considerable space to fall through, were of an unusually large size. Though this was a supernatural storm, there have been many of a natural kind, that have been exceedingly dreadful. A storm of hail fell near Liverpool, in Lancashire, in the year 1795, which greatly damaged the vegetation, broke windows, etc., etc. Many of the stones measured five inches in circumference. Dr. Halley mentions a similar storm of hail in Lancashire, Cheshire, etc., in 1697, April 29, that for sixty miles in length and two miles in breadth did immense damage, by splitting trees, killing fowls and all small animals, knocking down men and horses, etc., etc. Mezeray, in his History of France, says "that in Italy, in 1510, there was for some time a horrible darkness, thicker than that of night, after which the clouds broke into thunder and lightning, and there fell a shower of hail-stones which destroyed all the beasts, birds, and even fish of the country. It was attended with a strong smell of sulphur, and the stones were of a bluish color, some of them weighing one hundred pounds' weight." The Almighty says to Job: "Hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?" Job 38:22, Job 38:23. While God has such artillery at his command, how soon may he desolate a country or a world! See the account of a remarkable hail-storm in Jos 10:11.

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EXODUS 9:19 Now therefore command that all of your livestock and all that you have in the field be brought into shelter. Every man and animal that is found in the field, and isn't brought home, the hail shall come down on them, and they shall die.'''''

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#### Verse 19

Send - now, and gather thy cattle - So in the midst of judgment, God remembered mercy. The miracle should be wrought that they might know he was the Lord; but all the lives both of men and beasts might have been saved, had Pharaoh and his servants taken the warning so mercifully given them. While some regarded not the word of the Lord, others feared it, and their cattle and their servants were saved, See Exo 9:20, Exo 9:21.

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EXODUS 9:20 Those who feared the LORD's word among the servants of Pharaoh made their servants and their livestock flee into the houses.

EXODUS 9:21 Whoever didn't respect the LORD's word left his servants and his livestock in the field.

EXODUS 9:22 The LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky, that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt, on man, and on animal, and on every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt."

EXODUS 9:23 Moses stretched out his rod toward the heavens, and the LORD sent thunder, hail, and lightning flashed down to the earth. The LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt.

## Verse 23

The Lord sent thunder - קולות koloth, voices; but loud, repeated peals of thunder are meant.

And the fire ran along upon the ground - וַתֵּלַח אֵשׁ אַרְצָה vattihalac esh aretsah, and the fire walked upon the earth. It was not a sudden flash of lightning, but a devouring fire, walking through every part, destroying both animals and vegetables; and its progress was irresistible.

EXODUS 9:24 So there was very severe hail, and lightning mixed with the hail, such as had not been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.

## Verse 24

Hail, and fire mingled with the hail - It is generally allowed that the electric fluid is essential to the formation of hail. On this occasion it was supplied in a supernatural abundance; for streams of fire seem to have accompanied the descending hail, so that herbs and trees, beasts and men, were all destroyed by them.

EXODUS 9:25 The hail struck throughout all the land of Egypt all that was in the field, both man and animal; and the hail struck every herb of the field, and broke every tree of the field.

EXODUS 9:26 Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, there was no hail.

## Verse 26

Only in the land of Goshen - was there no hail - What a signal proof of a most particular providence! Surely both the Hebrews and Egyptians profited by this display of the goodness and severity of God.

EXODUS 9:27 Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "I have sinned this time. The LORD is righteous, and I and my people are wicked.

## Verse 27

The Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked - The original is very emphatic: The Lord is The Righteous One, (הַצַּדִּיק hatstaddik), and I and my people are The Sinners, (הַרְשָׁעִים hareshaim); i.e., He is alone righteous, and we alone are transgressors. Who could have imagined that after such an acknowledgment and confession, Pharaoh should have again hardened his heart?

EXODUS 9:28 Pray to the LORD; for there has been enough of mighty thunderings and hail. I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer."

## Verse 28

It is enough - There is no need of any farther plague; I submit to the authority of Jehovah and will rebel no more.

Mighty thunderings - כִּלְתֵי אֱלֹהִים koloth Elohim, voices of God; - that is, superlatively loud thunder. So mountains of God (Psa 36:6) means exceeding high mountains. So a prince of God (Gen 23:6) means a mighty prince. See a description of thunder, Psa 29:3-8 : "The Voice Of The Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth; the Lord is upon many waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars. The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire. The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness," etc. The production of rain by the electric spark is alluded to in a very beautiful manner, Jer 10:13 : When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens. See Clarke's note on Gen 7:11, and Gen 8:1 (note).

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EXODUS 9:29 Moses said to him, "As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will spread abroad my hands to the LORD. The thunders shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; that you may know that the earth is the LORD's.

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#### Verse 29

I will spread abroad my hands - That is, I will make supplication to God that he may remove this plague. This may not be an improper place to make some observations on the ancient manner of approaching the Divine Being in prayer. Kneeling down, stretching out the hands, and lifting them up to heaven, were in frequent use among the Hebrews in their religious worship. Solomon kneeled down on his knees, and spread forth his hands to heaven; 2Chr 6:13. So David, Psa 143:6 : I stretch forth my hands unto thee. So Ezra: I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God; Ezr 9:5. See also Job Job 11:13 : If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thy hands towards him. Most nations who pretended to any kind of worship made use of the same means in approaching the objects of their adoration, viz., kneeling down and stretching out their hands; which custom it is very likely they borrowed from the people of God. Kneeling was ever considered to be the proper posture of supplication, as it expresses humility, contrition, and subjection. If the person to whom the supplication was addressed was within reach, the supplicant caught him by the knees; for as among the ancients the forehead was consecrated to genius, the ear to memory, and the right hand to faith, so the knees were consecrated to mercy. Hence those who entreated favor fell at and caught hold of the knees of the person whose kindness they supplicated. This mode of supplication is particularly referred to in the following passages in Homer: - Τῷ γ' ἄνω μιν μνησασα παρεζεο, και λαβε γουνων.

Iliad i., ver. 407.

Now therefore, of these things reminding Jove,  
Embrace his knees.  
Cowper.

To which the following answer is made: - Καὶ τότε εἰπετα τοι εἰμι Διὸς ποτὶ χαλκοβατεὶς δῶ, καὶ μιν γουνασομαι, καὶ μιν πεισεσθαι οἴω.

Iliad i., ver. 426.



Then will I to Jove's brazen-floor'd abode, That I may clasp his knees; and much misdeem Of my endeavor, or my prayer shall speed. Id. See the issue of thus addressing Jove, Ibid., ver. 500-502, and ver. 511, etc.

In the same manner we find our Lord accosted, Mat 17:14 : There came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him γονυπετων αυτον, falling down at his knees.

As to the lifting up or stretching out of the hands, (often joined to kneeling), of which we have seen already several instances, and of which we have a very remarkable one in this book, Exo 17:11, where the lifting up or stretching out of the hands of Moses was the means of Israel's prevailing over Amalek; we find many examples of both in ancient authors. Thus Homer: - Εσθλον γαρ Δυ χειρας ανασχεμεν, αι κ' ελεηση.

Iliad xxiv., ver. 301.

For right it is to spread abroad the hands To Jove for mercy.

Also Virgil: -

Corripio e stratis corpus,  
Tendoque supinas ad coelum cum voce manus, et munera libo  
Aeneid iii., ver. 176.

I started from my bed, and raised on high  
My hands and voice in rapture to the sky;  
And pour libations.  
Ptt.

Dixerat: et Genua Amplexus, genibusque volutans Haerebat.

Ibid., ver. 607.

Then kneel'd the wretch, and suppliant clung around  
My knees with tears, and grovell'd on the ground.  
Id. - media inter numina divum Multa Jovem  
Manibus Supplex orasse SUPINIS.  
Ibid. iv., ver. 204.

Amidst the statues of the gods he stands,  
And spreading forth to Jove his lifted hands.  
Id.

Et Duplices cum voce Manus ad sidera

Tendit. Ibid. x., ver. 667.

And lifted both his hands and voice to heaven.

In some cases the person petitioning came forward, and either sat in the dust or kneeled on the ground, placing his left hand on the knee of him from whom he expected the favor, while he touched the person's chin with his right. We have an instance of this also in Homer: Και ρα παροιθ' αυτοιο καθεζετο, και λαβε γουνων Σκαιη· δεξιτερη δ' αρ' υπ' ανθερεωνος ελουσα.

Iliad i., ver. 500.

Suppliant the goddess stood: one hand she placed  
Beneath his chin, and one his knee embraced.  
Pope.

When the suppliant could not approach the person to whom he prayed, as where a deity was the object of the prayer, he washed his hands, made an offering, and kneeling down, either stretched out both his hands to heaven, or laid them upon the offering or sacrifice, or upon the altar. Thus Homer represents the priest of Apollo praying: - Χερνιψαντο δ' επειτα, και ουλοχυτας ανελοντο. Τοισιν δε Χρυσης μεγαλ' ευχετο, χειρας ανασχων.

Iliad i., ver. 449.

With water purify their hands, and take  
The sacred offering of the salted cake,  
While thus, with arms devoutly raised in air,  
And solemn voice, the priest directs his prayer.  
Pope.

How necessary ablutions of the whole body, and of the hands particularly, accompanied with offerings and sacrifices were, under the law, every reader of the Bible knows: see especially Exo 29:1-4, where Aaron and his sons were commanded to be washed, previously to their performing the priest's office; and Exo 30:19-21, where it is said: "Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands - that they die not." See also Lev 17:15. When the high priest among the Jews blessed the people, he lifted up his hands, Lev 9:22. And the Israelites, when they presented a sacrifice to God, lifted up their hands and placed them on the head of the victim: "If any man of you bring an offering unto the Lord - of the cattle of the herd, and of the flock - he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering, and it shall be accepted for him, to make atonement for him;" Lev 1:2-4. To these circumstances the apostle alludes, 1Tim 2:8: "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." In the apostle's word *επαροντας*, lifting up, there is a manifest reference to stretching out the hands to place them either on the altar or on the head of the victim. Four things were signified by this lifting up of the hands. 1. It was the posture of supplication, and expressed a strong invitation - Come to my help; 2. It expressed the earnest desire of the person to lay hold on the help he required, by bringing him who was the object of his prayer to his assistance; 3. It showed the ardor of the person to receive the blessings he expected; and 4. By this act he designated and consecrated his offering or sacrifice to his God.

From a great number of evidences and coincidences it is not unreasonable to conclude that the heathens borrowed all that was pure and rational, even in their mode of worship, from the ancient people of God; and that the preceding quotations are proofs of this.

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EXODUS 9:30 But as for you and your servants, I know that you don't yet fear the LORD God."

EXODUS 9:31 The flax and the barley were struck, for the barley was in the ear, and the flax was in bloom.

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Verse 31

The flax and the barley was smitten - The word פשתה *pishtah*, flax, Mr. Parkhurst thinks, is derived from the root פשח *pashat*, to strip, because the substance which we term flax is properly the bark or

rind of the vegetable, pilled or stripped off the stalks. From time immemorial Egypt was celebrated for the production and manufacture of flax: hence the linen and fine linen of Egypt, so often spoken of in ancient authors.

Barley - שַׁעֲרָה seorah, from שַׁעַר saar, to stand on end, to be rough, bristly, etc.; hence שַׁעַר sear, the hair of the head, and שַׁעִיר sair, a he-goat, because of its shaggy hair; and hence also barley, because of the rough and prickly beard with which the ears are covered and defended.

Dr. Pocock has observed that there is a double seed-time and harvest in Egypt: Rice, India wheat, and a grain called the corn of Damascus, and in Italian surgo rosso, are sown and reaped at a very different time from wheat, barley and flax. The first are sown in March, before the overflowing of the Nile, and reaped about October; whereas the wheat and barley are sown in November and December, as soon as the Nile is gone off, and are reaped before May.

Pliny observes, Hist. Nat., lib. xviii., cap. 10, that in Egypt the barley is ready for reaping in six months after it is sown, and wheat in seven. In Aegypto Hordeum sexto a satu mense, Feumenta septimo metuntur.

The flax was boiled - Meaning, I suppose, was grown up into a stalk: the original is גִּבּוֹל gibol, podded or was in the pod.

The word well expresses that globous pod on the top of the stalk of flax which succeeds the flower and contains the seed, very properly expressed by the Septuagint, το δε λινον σπερματιζον, but the flax was in seed or was seeding.

EXODUS 9:32 But the wheat and the spelt were not struck, for they had not grown up.

#### Verse 32

But the wheat and the rye were not smitten - Wheat, חִטָּה chittah, which Mr. Parkhurst thinks should be derived from the Chaldee and Samaritan חַטִּי chati, which signifies tender, delicious, delicate, because of the superiority of its flavor, etc., to every other kind of grain. But this term in Scripture appears to mean any kind of bread-corn. Rye, כִּסְמֶת kussemeth, from כָּסָם casam, to have long hair; and hence, though the particular species is not known, the word must mean some bearded grain. The Septuagint call it ολυρα, the Vulgate for, and Aquila ζεα, which signify the grain called spelt; and some suppose that rice is meant.

Mr. Harmer, referring to the double harvest in Egypt mentioned by Dr. Pocock, says that the circumstance of the wheat and the rye being אֶפִּילֹת aphiloth, dark or hidden, as the margin renders it, (i.e., they were sown, but not grown up), shows that it was the Indian wheat or surgo rosso mentioned Exo 9:31, which, with the rye, escaped, while the barley and flax were smitten because they were at or nearly at a state of maturity. See Harmer's Obs., vol. iv., p. 11, edit 1808. But what is intended by the words in the Hebrew text we cannot positively say, as there is a great variety of opinions on this subject, both among the versions and the commentators. The Anglo-Saxon translator, probably from not knowing the meaning of the words, omits the whole verse.

EXODUS 9:33 Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh, and spread abroad his hands to the LORD; and the thunders and hail ceased, and the rain was not poured on the earth.

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 Verse 33

Spread abroad his hands - Probably with the rod of God in them. See what has been said on the spreading out of the hands in prayer, Exo 9:29. See Clarke on Exo 9:29 (note).

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EXODUS 9:34 When Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants.

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## Verse 34

He sinned yet more, and hardened his heart - These were merely acts of his own; "for who can deny," says Mr. Psalmanazar, "that what God did on Pharaoh was much more proper to soften than to harden his heart; especially when it is observable that it was not till after seeing each miracle, and after the ceasing of each plague, that his heart is said to have been hardened? The verbs here used are in the conjugations pihel and hiphil, and often signify a bare permission, from which it is plain that the words should have been read, God suffered the heart of Pharaoh to be hardened." - Universal Hist., vol. i., p. 494. Note D.

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EXODUS 9:35 The heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he didn't let the children of Israel go, just as the LORD had spoken through Moses.

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## Verse 35

And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened - In consequence of his sinning yet more, and hardening his own heart against both the judgments and mercies of God, we need not be surprised that, after God had given him the means of softening and repentance, and he had in every instance resisted and abused them, he should at last have been left to the hardness and darkness of his own obstinate heart, so as to fill up the measure of his iniquity, and rush headlong to his own destruction.

In the fifth, sixth, and seventh plagues described in this chapter, we have additional proofs of the justice and mercy of God, as well as of the stupidity, rebellion, and wickedness of Pharaoh and his courtiers. As these continued to contradict and resist, it was just that God should continue to inflict those punishments which their iniquities deserved. Yet in the midst of judgment he remembers mercy; and therefore Moses and Aaron are sent to inform the Egyptians that such plagues would come if they continued obstinate. Here is mercy; the cattle only are destroyed, and the people saved! Is it not evident from all these messages, and the repeated expostulations of Moses and Aaron in the name and on the authority of God, that Pharaoh was bound by no fatal necessity to continue his obstinacy; that he might have humbled himself before God, and thus prevented the disasters that fell on the land, and saved himself and his people from destruction? But he would sin, and therefore he must be punished.

In the sixth plague Pharaoh had advantages which he had not before. The magicians, by their successful imitations of the miracles wrought by Moses, made it doubtful to the Egyptians whether Moses himself was not a magician acting without any Divine authority; but the plague of the boils,

which they could not imitate, by which they were themselves afflicted, and which they confessed to be the finger of God, decided the business.

Pharaoh had no longer any excuse, and must know that he had now to contend, not with Moses and Aaron, mortals like himself, but with the living God. How strange, then, that he should continue to resist! Many affect to be astonished at this, and think it must be attributed only to a sovereign controlling influence of God, which rendered it impossible for him to repent or take warning. But the whole conduct of God shows the improbability of this opinion: and is not the conduct of Pharaoh and his courtiers copied and reacted by thousands who are never suspected to be under any such necessitating decree? Every sinner under heaven, who has the Bible in his hand, is acting the same part. God says to the swearer and the profane, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; and yet common swearing and profaneness are most scandalously common among multitudes who bear the Christian name, and who presume on the mercy of God to get at last to the kingdom of heaven! He says also, Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy; thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness; thou shalt not covet; and sanctions all these commandments with the most awful penalties: and yet, with all these things before them, and the professed belief that they came from God, Sabbath-breakers, men-slayers, adulterers, fornicators, thieves, dishonest men, false witnesses, liars, slanderers, backbiters, covetous men, lovers of the world more than lovers of God, are found by hundreds and thousands! What were the crimes of the poor half-blind Egyptian king when compared with these! He sinned against a comparatively unknown God; these sin against the God of their fathers - against the God and Father of Him whom they call their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! They sin with the Bible in their hand, and a conviction of its Divine authority in their hearts. They sin against light and knowledge; against the checks of their consciences, the reproofs of their friends, the admonitions of the messengers of God; against Moses and Aaron in the law; against the testimony of all the prophets; against the evangelists, the apostles, the Maker of heaven and earth, the Judge of all men, and the Savior of the world! What were Pharaoh's crimes to the crimes of these? On comparison, his atom of moral turpitude is lost in their world of iniquity. And yet who supposes these to be under any necessitating decree to sin on, and go to perdition? Nor are they; nor was Pharaoh. In all things God has proved both his justice and mercy to be clear in this point. Pharaoh, through a principle of covetousness, refused to dismiss the Israelites, whose services he found profitable to the state: these are absorbed in the love of the world, the love of pleasure, and the love of gain; nor will they let one lust go, even in the presence of the thunders of Sinai, or in sight of the agony, bloody sweat, crucifixion, and death of Jesus Christ! Alas! how many are in the habit of considering Pharaoh the worst of human beings, inevitably cut off from the possibility of being saved because of his iniquities, who outdo him so far in the viciousness of their lives, that Pharaoh, hardening his heart against ten plagues, appears a saint when compared with those who are hardening their hearts against ten millions of mercies. Reader, art thou of this number? Proceed no farther! God's judgments linger not. Desperate as thy state is, thou mayest return; and thou, even thou, find mercy through the blood of the Lamb.

See the observations at the conclusion of the next chapter. See Clarke at Exo 10:29 (note).