

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown

Bible Study Notes

7-8-20

Exodus 8

The Plague of Frogs - Verses 1-15

¹ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me. ² If you refuse to let them go, I will send a plague of frogs on your whole country. ³ The Nile will teem with frogs. They will come up into your palace and your bedroom and onto your bed, into the houses of your officials and on your people, and into your ovens and kneading troughs. ⁴ The frogs will come up on you and your people and all your officials.'" ⁵ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'Stretch out your hand with your staff over the streams and canals and ponds, and make frogs come up on the land of Egypt.'" ⁶ So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land. ⁷ But the magicians did the same things by their secret arts; they also made frogs come up on the land of Egypt. ⁸ Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "Pray to the LORD to take the frogs away from me and my people, and I will let your people go to offer sacrifices to the LORD." ⁹ Moses said to Pharaoh, "I leave to you the honor of setting the time for me to pray for you and your officials and your people that you and your houses may be rid of the frogs, except for those that remain in the Nile." ¹⁰ "Tomorrow," Pharaoh said. Moses replied, "It will be as you say, so that you may know there is no one like the LORD our God. ¹¹ The frogs will leave you and your houses, your officials and your people; they will remain only in the Nile." ¹² After Moses and Aaron left Pharaoh, Moses cried out to the LORD about the frogs he had brought on Pharaoh. ¹³ And the LORD did what Moses asked. The frogs died in the houses, in the courtyards and in the fields. ¹⁴ They were piled into heaps, and the land reeked of them. ¹⁵ But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the LORD had said.

8:3-4 Moses predicted that every house in Egypt would be infested with frogs. The poor of Egypt lived in small, mud-brick houses of one or two rooms with palm-trunk roofs. The homes of the rich, however, were often two or three stories high, surrounded by landscaped gardens and enclosed by a high wall. Servants lived and worked on the first floor while the family occupied the upper floors. Thus, if the frogs got into the royal bedrooms, they had infiltrated even the upper floors. No place in Egypt would be safe from them.

8:8-9 God allowed Pharaoh to say the time when the frogs would be taken away so that it would be clear it was God's work and not a coincidence. Saying the very time would make the prophecy specific enough that no natural explanation would suffice. God wanted to make it clear to everyone that He was responsible for the plagues and for removing the plagues. This is a major difference between the prophecies in Scripture and ones in the world (for example Nostradamus).

8:15 After repeated warnings, Pharaoh still refused to obey God. He hardened his heart every time there was a break in the plagues. His stubborn disobedience brought suffering upon himself and his entire country. While persistence is good, stubbornness is usually self-centered. Stubbornness

toward God amounts to rebellion against him. Rebellion will not only bring you grief, but it also may affect those who stand with you.

The Plague of Gnats - Verses 16-19

¹⁶ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the ground,' and throughout the land of Egypt the dust will become gnats." ¹⁷ They did this, and when Aaron stretched out his hand with the staff and struck the dust of the ground, gnats came on people and animals. All the dust throughout the land of Egypt became gnats. ¹⁸ But when the magicians tried to produce gnats by their secret arts, they could not. Since the gnats were on people and animals everywhere, ¹⁹ the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hard and he would not listen, just as the LORD had said.

8:16 This time the plague was gnats. Many of these plagues take the punishment up a notch and I think this one is no exception. You might be able to keep frogs out of at least some areas of the house since they are big and can't get through small holes, but with gnats thick as clouds everywhere there would be no way to get any personal time away from the gnats. They would be in people's houses and food and in their clothes, at work and in the fields. While people may only need to deal with frogs when they went out, they would have to deal with the gnats all the time. These gnats would probably also go in people's ears and nose and mouth. While it wasn't life threatening, it would have been very annoying.

8:16-17 The dust became gnats. This is reminiscent of God creating man from the dust of the ground. In this miracle God actually changed dust into gnats, probably unlike the last miracle of frogs where God more likely used natural causes to bring frogs to Egypt. This was a more amazing miracle as shown by the magicians' response to it.

8:18 This was the first time the magicians had been unable to duplicate the miracle. Their magic tricks and sorcery could no longer keep up, even in a small scale with the miracles God was doing. Although their hearts were evil and stubborn to the core, even they admitted this was the finger of God. This is a clear example that man's best and Satan's best falls far short of what God is able to do. There really is no comparison. For a time people might convince themselves that God isn't true or that they have more control over their lives than they do, but eventually everyone will realize that God is the only one with true power.

8:19 Some people think, "If only I could see a miracle, I could believe in God." God gave Pharaoh just such an opportunity. When gnats infested Egypt, even the magicians agreed that this was God's work ("the finger of God")—but still Pharaoh refused to believe. He was stubborn, and stubbornness can blind a person to the truth. When you rid yourself of stubbornness, you may be surprised by abundant evidence of God's work in your life.

The Plague of Flies - Verses 20-25

²⁰ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Get up early in the morning and confront Pharaoh as he goes to the river and say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me. ²¹ If you do not let my people go, I will send swarms of flies on you and your officials, on your people and into your houses. The houses of the Egyptians will be full of flies; even the ground will be covered with them. ²² "But on that day I will deal differently with the land of Goshen, where my people live; no swarms of flies will be there, so that you will know that I, the LORD, am in this land. ²³ I will make a distinction between my people and your people. This

sign will occur tomorrow.”²⁴ And the LORD did this. Dense swarms of flies poured into Pharaoh's palace and into the houses of his officials; throughout Egypt the land was ruined by the flies.²⁵ Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, “Go, sacrifice to your God here in the land.”

8:20-21 Again Moses gave God's command to Pharaoh and warned Pharaoh what would happen if he didn't listen. This again highlights man's responsibility to respond to God's commands as well as God's mercy in not unilaterally judging without giving a chance to repent (example Nineveh). Moses made it clear that this plague would affect not only Pharaoh's people, but himself and everyone in the palace. He also emphasized the extent of the plague indicating that Egypt would be full of flies even in the Egyptians houses. They would be so thick and so many that the people couldn't hope to stop their onslaught (through burning bad smelling stuff or screens on the windows or any other method).

8:23-25 God made another change in this plague to highlight the fact that it was miracle, that He was responsible for it, that He could control it, and that it was not a coincidence. This time He said that the people of Israel in the land of Goshen would not have to go through this plague. There would be an invisible line something like an electrical force field fence keeping dogs in the yard between Goshen and the rest of Egypt. Flies would descend on the Egyptians, but not on the Israelites. In addition to proving again His power, this miracle demonstrated God's love for the Israelites. Although He didn't save them out of all the plagues, He did deliver them from the worst ones.

God does deal differently with us than He does with unbelievers. Praise the Lord for this. This means we don't have to go through the worst of the punishments the world will face. We can be saved out. This is the essence of the salvation God offers. God doesn't destroy the righteous along with the wicked. He is merciful and loving and we should enthusiastically take His offer if we want to escape judgment.

Interchange between God, Moses, and Pharaoh - Verses 26-32

²⁶ But Moses said, “That would not be right. The sacrifices we offer the LORD our God would be detestable to the Egyptians. And if we offer sacrifices that are detestable in their eyes, will they not stone us?”²⁷ We must take a three-day journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God, as he commands us.”²⁸ Pharaoh said, “I will let you go to offer sacrifices to the LORD your God in the wilderness, but you must not go very far. Now pray for me.”²⁹ Moses answered, “As soon as I leave you, I will pray to the LORD, and tomorrow the flies will leave Pharaoh and his officials and his people. Only let Pharaoh be sure that he does not act deceitfully again by not letting the people go to offer sacrifices to the Lord”³⁰ Then Moses left Pharaoh and prayed to the LORD,³¹ and the LORD did what Moses asked. The flies left Pharaoh and his officials and his people; not a fly remained.³² But this time also Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not let the people go.

8:25 The Israelites would be sacrificing animals that the Egyptians regarded as sacred, and this would be offensive to them. Moses was concerned about a violent reaction to sacrificing these animals near the Egyptians.

8:26-29 Pharaoh wanted a compromise. He would allow the Hebrews to sacrifice, but only if they would do it nearby. God's requirement, however, was firm: The Hebrews had to leave Egypt. Sometimes people urge believers to compromise and give only partial obedience to God's commands. But commitment and obedience to God cannot be negotiated. When it comes to obeying God, half measures won't do.