



“I will smite thy borders with frogs...”

In the previous chapter, we read of the first plague God sent against Egypt – rivers of blood. Their sacred river brought forth the shocking profusion of blood instead of water. Being terrified of blood, the Egyptians were severely shocked. Moreover, there was no water to drink for seven days until the waters were restored by God – a number signifying that the perfect plan of God will be accomplished. Yet, Pharaoh did not yield to let God’s people go. Divine judgment has one of two effects, either to awaken the penitent heart, or to harden the heart of the reprobate. We see that Pharaoh’s heart was of the latter category. It is not the act of God to harden Pharaoh’s heart, but the nature of his heart that hardens it – a heart rebellious to authority and, particularly, the authority of the Almighty God. How much heartache could have been avoided had Pharaoh simply heeded the voice of the Lord from the first? How much heartache in our own lives could have been avoided had we simply yielded, from the beginning, to His perfect will? Altogether, God will have sent ten terrible plagues against Egypt ere Pharaoh reluctantly yields. After all is finished, Pharaoh will have lost his most prized possession – his first-born son.

In this chapter, God sends three more plagues – frogs, gnats (lice), and flies.

¹ And the LORD spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me. ² And if thou refuse to let them go, behold, I will smite all thy borders with frogs: ³ And the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into thine house, and into thy bedchamber, and upon thy bed, and into the house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneadingtroughs: ⁴ And the frogs shall come up both on thee, and upon thy people, and upon all thy servants. ⁵ And the LORD spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch forth thine hand with thy rod over the streams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and cause frogs to come up upon the land of Egypt. ⁶ And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs came up, and covered the land of Egypt. (Ex 8:1-6)

Pharaoh makes a fitting stand-in for Satan in this narrative. The only power that Satan understands is that demand of God, “*Let my people go that they may serve me.*” Satan is literally powerless against such a people that serve God only. God now covers the land of Egypt with frogs – a most appropriate plague since the Egyptians considered the frog as one of their gods and were defenseless to kill them. In fact, all three plagues mentioned in Exodus 8 were related to the superstitions and false idols of Egypt. God gives them their deities so much in their faces that the revulsion was mixed with fear of offending them.

THE CURSE OF FROGS

Imagine having frogs covering your walkway, your baths, our beds, and even your ovens – frogs EVERYWHERE croaking and hopping about – little gods that are immune from banishment by their victims!

⁷ And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt. ⁸ Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, Intreat the LORD, that he may take away the frogs from me, and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may do sacrifice unto the LORD. ⁹ And Moses said unto Pharaoh, Glory over me: when shall I intreat for thee, and for thy servants, and for thy people, to destroy the frogs from thee and thy houses, that they may remain in the river only? ¹⁰ And he said, To morrow. And he said, Be it according to thy word: that thou mayest know that there is none like unto the LORD our God. ¹¹ And the frogs shall depart from thee, and from thy houses, and from thy servants, and from thy people; they shall remain in the river only. ¹² And Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh: and Moses cried unto the LORD because of the frogs which he had brought against Pharaoh. ¹³ And the LORD did according to the word of Moses; and the frogs died out of the houses, out of the villages, and out of the fields. ¹⁴ And they gathered them together upon heaps: and the land stank. ¹⁵ But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said. (Ex 8:7-15)

Note that the sorcerers of Egypt attempted to mimic the miracle of God performed by Moses – but their pretended miracle simply reinforces God’s curse in bringing frogs upon the land. There is not much of a miracle involved in calling up frogs that God has already called up.

Finally, Pharaoh seems to relent and agrees to allow the children to go, but it is like the false repentance of many evil workers – it is not genuine and it is not sincere. Once relieved of the curse, Pharaoh again refuses to allow the children to go. God brings judgment, and the wicked may relent for a time, but the essential sinfulness of their hearts lead them immediately back into rebellion against the will of God.

THE CURSE OF LICE

Thought the hearts and minds of the false worshippers of Egypt were, by nature, filthy and unclean, yet the priest were meticulous to check out their garments prior to worship to insure that they were clear of lice. The curse of lice covering the land must have required an exasperating labor on their parts:

¹⁶ And the LORD said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt. ¹⁷ And they did so; for Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and smote the dust of the earth, and it became lice in man, and in beast; all the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt. ¹⁸ And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not: so there were lice upon man, and upon beast. ¹⁹ Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said. (Ex 8:16-19)

Amazingly, even the magicians of Egypt recognized the Finger of God in the sending forth of these curses; yet, Pharaoh remained adamantly bent on rebellion against God’s demands.

²⁰ And the LORD said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh; lo, he cometh forth to the water; and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me. ²¹ Else, if thou wilt not let my people

go, behold, I will send swarms of flies upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy houses: and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground whereon they are. ²² And I will sever in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there; to the end thou mayest know that I am the LORD in the midst of the earth. ²³ And I will put a division between my people and thy people: to morrow shall this sign be. (Ex 8:20-23)

There is more than one gem of promise and truth here in this last passage. In the command of God to let His people go, there is an unseen circumstance that has existed from the beginning. That is the circumstance of the impossibility of worship in Egypt for the people of God. Egypt, prophetically, means SIN. It is not possible to worship God in the land of SIN. We must leave our old sinful lives and live in the righteousness imputed by Christ. Another point in the plague of the curse of flies is that the fly, too, was a deity to the Egyptians. It is equivalent to the Beelzebub of Ekron, or Lord of the Flies. God reveals a fundamental principle also in the separation He makes between His people and those of Satan. God says He will make a division between His people and those of Pharaoh. It is true as well of the division He makes between His people and the children of the world (or the devil).

²⁵ And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land. ²⁶ And Moses said, It is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the LORD our God: lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us? ²⁷ We will go three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the LORD our God, as he shall command us. (Ex 8:25-27)

It is impossible to serve God in the land of Sin. Remember that Jesus was not able to perform works of healing because of the lack of faith: *"But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them."* (Mark 6:4-5) So Moses proposes that they be allowed to go a three days journey away from the people of Egypt in order to worship in a Godly manner.

Pharaoh now issues a favorite line of Satan: *"²⁸ And Pharaoh said, I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness; only ye shall not go very far away: intreat for me."* (Ex 8:28) Satan does not mind a lukewarm worshipper. He does not mind a pretended holiness as long as it falls very short of the expectations of God. "It is OK to be a nominal Christian as long as you do not take your faith too seriously", says Satan.

²⁹ And Moses said, Behold, I go out from thee, and I will intreat the LORD that the swarms of flies may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people, to morrow: but let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more in not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD. ³⁰ And Moses went out from Pharaoh, and intreated the LORD. ³¹ And the LORD did according to the word of Moses; and he removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people; there remained not one. (Ex 8:29-31)

Herein lies another fundamental truth: God will forever lie to you. He will make promises he never intends to keep. God is always faithful to perform His promises. He again removes the effects of the curse removing every single fly from Egypt. So how does Pharaoh follow up his promise? *"³² And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go."* (Ex 8:32) The devil is incapable of obedience to God, and neither are those who love his deceitful ways.

Have you departed all of the way from Egypt and the land of sin? Or have you gone not so *"very far away,"* cherishing some old and precious sin in your heart of hearts?