

1. Introduction: The Second Cycle of Three Plagues
2. Fourth Plague: Biting Insects (8:20-32)
 - a. The Distinction between Egypt and Israel (8:22-23)
 - b. Pharaoh's Negotiation with Moses (8:25-32)
3. Fifth Plague: Livestock Disease (9:1-7)
 - a. The Intensification of the Plagues
 - b. Pharaoh's Investigation (9:6-7)
4. Sixth Plague: Painful Skin Disease (9:8-12)
 - a. The Sign of the Soot (9:8-10)
 - b. The Failure of the Sorcerer Priests (9:11)
5. The Strengthening of Pharaoh's Heart (9:12)
 - a. Earlier Predictions (4:21; 7:3)
 - b. Pharaoh Made His Own Heart Heavy (8:15, 32, 9:7)
 - c. Pharaoh's Heart Was Strengthened (7:13, 22; 8:19; 9:34)
 - a. The Lord Strengthened Pharaoh's Heart (9:12; 10:20, 27; 11:10; 14:4, 8, 17)
 - b. The Purpose of the Lord in Strengthening Pharaoh's Heart: to Reveal His Sovereign Power (Rom 9:17)

“The strengthening of Pharaoh's heart is not about making him act contrary to his own will. Rather, it is the reverse; it is about giving him the boldness or courage to do what he most desires.” —T. Desmond Alexander

“Taken together, what these statements show is that Pharaoh's heart was doubly hard. He hardened his own heart; nevertheless, God hardened his heart for him. Both of these statements are true, and there is no contradiction between them. Pharaoh's will was God's will. God not only knew that Pharaoh would refuse to let his people go, but he actually ordained it. This is the paradox of divine sovereignty and human responsibility, which is not a puzzle to be solved but a mystery to be adored.” —Philip Ryken

Reflection Questions (for personal reflection and family conversation):

1. In what ways do these three signs show an intensification of God's judgment on Egypt?
2. Why does God strengthen Pharaoh's heart when Pharaoh is set on defying his commands?