

The Third Plague: Lice Exodus 8:16-19

In spite of two serious judgments (blood and frogs), Pharaoh's heart is as hard as ever. As uncomfortable as these plagues were, Pharaoh had methods of working around them. And after all, when Moses and Aaron came a second time with Yahweh's demand to let the people go into the wilderness to worship Him, the king was unmoved. But with this third plague, the intensity is increased, and the magicians find their power is gone. We begin today with "a cloud of dust."

I. The Cloud of Dust

- A. This plague is first a reminder that *Dust we are and to dust we shall return*.
- B. The deity involved here appears to be Geb (earth god, farming, earthquakes, snakes).
- C. This plague comes without warning & reminds Pharaoh that Yahweh may strike at any time.
- D. Mankind always stands on the edge of judgment. ("Prepare to meet thy god." – Amos 4:12)
- E. We, who are but dust, must remain humble in the face of God's mighty works

II. The Attack of the Cooties

- A. Not everyone agrees whether these pests are lice, fleas or mosquitoes. (not our gnats)
- B. Whatever type, they were tiny blood-suckers that affixed themselves to men and animals.
- C. They settled on the body like dust that covers everything. (Putu, Egypt's *Khamsin* (50 days))
- D. Thus, the plague hit suddenly and became very personal and inescapable. (like sin)
- E. Without God's help his judgments will drain the very life from us.
- F. Hardness of heart is no cure, while repentance will be the beginning of relief.

III. The National Crisis

- A. The narrative tells us "all the dust of the earth became lice throughout all...Egypt."
- B. Everyone in the kingdom suffered, including the Israelites.
- C. We are reminded again that judgment on a nation usually hurts everyone. (WW2)
- D. A thriving nation can (as we know) lose its energy and focus as life becomes only pain.
- E. If my people who are called by my name humble themselves and pray ...then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.
- F. By sharing in the nation's suffering, one is able to offer hope to unbelievers and believers.

IV. The Confession of the Magicians

- A. Whatever confidence these men had is shattered.
- B. The lack of warning left them with no plan, and their powerlessness became obvious.
- C. Truth can slap people awake and turn them from their delusions.
- D. Truth leads to a meaningful confession: "*This is the finger of God.*" (And can lead to faith.)
- E. Whatever leads us to doubt our idols and our magic is good for us.
- F. Jesus said, "But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you."
- G. Let us rejoice to be members of His kingdom and be comforted by His promises.