

Message #14**Exodus 8:1-32**

We are in the section of Exodus in which God is targeting Pharaoh and the Egyptians with His judgmental plagues that are designed to show His majestic and sovereign power to the world with the ultimate goal of freeing the Hebrew people so they may leave Egypt and go to the place God wants them to go.

The Pharaoh's name is Amenhotep II. He came to the throne when he was 18-years-old and he was a proud man. Leon Wood said, "he prided himself in his horsemanship and claimed to be a better handler of ships and more expert with the bow than any other. He conducted at least three successful military campaigns north in Syria...and was able to continue Egypt's southern boundary..." (*A Survey of Israel's History*, p. 123).

This Pharaoh was a proud man and when Moses and Aaron approached him and requested that he allow the Hebrews to leave so they could worship YHWH, he flat out refused. Not only that but he made life worse for the Hebrew people. So God knew just how to break this proud, arrogant Pharaoh/King down.

God decided to send ten specific, sovereign, miraculous judgment plagues which increase in intensity, which are all designed to get this Pharaoh to acknowledge God and release His people. Each plague is designed to turn up more and more pressure against this arrogant Pharaoh so that he would be gradually broken down to the point where he would finally let the Hebrews go.

Miracle Plagues 1-4 - Water/blood; frogs; gnats; flies would make life in Egypt very miserable .

Miracle Plague 5 - Death of livestock—affects food supplies and causes great material loss.

Miracle Plague 6 - Boils on people and animals—makes everything physically suffer.

Miracle Plagues 7-8 - Hail and Locusts—destroy people, livestock and crops.

Miracle Plague 9 - Darkness that dominates land is a serious psychological and emotional plague.

Miracle Plague 10 - Death of firstborn destroys life and emotions.

Tonight we want to examine **miracle plagues 2-4**.

SIGN MIRACLE #3 – God causes frogs to infest Egypt. 8:1-15 (PLAGUE #2)

We may assume that this plague occurred about seven days after the first plague (7:25). The first plague was to turn the water into blood. The second plague is to bring frogs into the land of Egypt.

In Psalms, these plagues were presented as literal plagues that displayed the sovereign power of God (Ps. 78:43-45; 105:30). They were not metaphorical or symbolic. They were literal.

Now liberals have attacked this plague by suggesting that the reason the frogs came up in such great numbers was because the Nile had been polluted to the point that fish died and that is what drove the frogs up onto the land.

However, any logical assessment of what happens here refutes that point. We may make five key observations that would indicate this was not a natural result of polluted water:

- 1) This happens in conjunction with the hand and staff of Moses and Aaron. **8:6**
- 2) The frogs did not just hang around the banks of the Nile but covered all Egypt. **8:6**
- 3) Pharaoh himself realizes this is a judgment of God. **8:7**—not some annual Nile River thing
- 4) The frogs left all the land and went back to the Nile at God's command. **8:11**
- 5) The frogs all died in massive numbers at the same time at different places. **8:13**

Well, this shows the folly of the liberals because what was it that polluted the water? It became blood. That is what killed the fish. So if you suggest that the reason for the frogs is the water became bad, then you actually acknowledge plague #1 is exactly why it became bad.

Now there are seven parts to plague number two:

PLAGUE TWO (Part #1) – What God told Moses to do. 8:1-4

In **verses 1-2**, God told Moses to go to Pharaoh and say either let My people go so they can serve me, or I will smite all the land of Egypt with frogs.

In **verses 3-4**, God describes seven negative results of this frog plague:

Result #1 - The Nile will swarm with frogs. 8:3a

The word “swarm” is interesting. It is a word that specifically refers to a great multiplication of numbers with moving, living, smaller creatures (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 850).

What this means is that God is saying that when He sends this plague, you will look out into the Nile and you will see the water multiplying in moving frogs. Just think of that for a moment. You are looking at the Nile and all of a sudden you see movement in the Nile, and as you look, you discover a multiplication of frogs in the Nile. It is swarming with frogs.

Result #2 - The frogs will go into your house . **8:3b**

Now the frogs get to shore and typically what frogs do is hang around the shoreline because this is where they find food and security. If something comes along, it can quickly get back into the water.

However, the frogs of this plague would not stay on the banks of the Nile; they would head for people's houses. Swarms and swarms of frogs would head for people's homes and there would be nothing anyone could do to stop them.

Now the specific target here is Pharaoh's house. His house was the best. It was the most secure. It was luxurious compared to other people's homes. But with all of his wealth and all of his security and guards, he would not be able to stop the frogs from coming right into his house.

Result #3 - The frogs will go into your bedrooms and get in your bed . **8:3c**

Again, this is a reference to Pharaoh's bedroom. He has security. He has, as it were, the "secret service" guarding him. Just think for a moment of crawling into bed and waking up with frogs all over your bedroom and in your bed.

Now this would be like someone going to the President of the United States and saying if you do not let God's people go and worship, He will send frogs specifically to the White House and you will not be able to stop them from coming into your house and right into the bedroom with you and Michelle. (Of course, with today's emphasis on green technology, they would probably employ Al Gore to start some "save the frogs" campaign.)

Result #4 - The frogs will go into the houses of all of the Egyptians . **8:3d**

Not only would God send these frogs to Pharaoh's house, but to all the Egyptians.

Result #5 - The frogs will go into your ovens . **8:3e**

These frogs would get into the ovens, so before you could cook food, you would be faced with frog removal.

Result #6 - The frogs will go into your bowls . **8:3f**

Before you could eat anything, you would have to scrub and clean your bowls because frogs would be in them.

Result #7 - The frogs will be on you, your people and all your servants. **8:4**

God would send these frogs against Pharaoh and against His people everywhere. God would target Pharaoh and his servants and command the frogs to hop into their world.

PLAGUE TWO (Part #2) – What God told Moses to tell Aaron to do. 8:5-6

Now immediately after they made this announcement to Pharaoh, God got right after this. He just said this is what I am going to do and He started to do it. We move now to the part Moses and Aaron played in this.

When they were before Pharaoh, Moses was to tell Aaron to stretch out his hand with the staff over the rivers, streams and pools and make the frogs come up on the land of Egypt. According to **verse 6**, Aaron did that and the land was covered with frogs. Now Pharaoh is learning Moses is the key guy connected to God and when Aaron does what he tells him, God's power is fully displayed. When God's people hear the Word taught and then obey it, God's power is fully displayed.

PLAGUE TWO (Part #3) – What the Egyptian magicians did. 8:7

Again, the Egyptian magicians did something very similar before Pharaoh. It is possible that God permitted Satan to give them power to do this, or God, Himself, gave them power to do this or it is also possible this is simply an illusionary magic trick.

It is obvious that these magicians are performing this before Pharaoh on a small scale, whereas Moses and Aaron had affected all of the land of Egypt. As one commentator said, they could have easily gathered some of the frogs and could go into a courtyard where there were no frogs yet there and by using curtains or smoke could have their team of illusionists release the frogs so it looked like they were able to do the same thing.

The purpose of these magicians doing this is so that Pharaoh will say our magicians can do the same thing Moses and Aaron can do, who claim they are from God. They wanted Pharaoh to think they were just as powerful as Moses was.

PLAGUE TWO (Part #4) – How Pharaoh responded to Moses. 8:8

No matter what the magicians did to produce the frogs, they could not get rid of them and Pharaoh realized that. He called Moses and Aaron and asked them to go to God and ask Him to get rid of the frogs from himself and his people. He said if Moses would do that, he would let the Hebrews go.

Pharaoh is now beginning to know the LORD. He is beginning to sense His sovereign power. He knew the "I, I AM" had the power to remove the frogs, so He asks Moses and Aaron to go to God and ask Him to do that.

PLAGUE TWO (Part #5) – How Moses responded to Pharaoh. 8:9-11

Moses was very respectful for Pharaoh and he said that he would pray just as Pharaoh had asked and that he would know there is no one like the LORD our God of the Hebrew people.

Now in **verse 9**, Moses asks Pharaoh when he wanted the frogs to leave. In **verse 10**, Pharaoh said, “tomorrow.”

Now one might ask why he didn’t say “right now,” “immediately or today”. Probably the reason is that Pharaoh is biding a little more time. He thinks that if the frogs leave today on their own, he would be off the hook of having to keep his bargain of letting the Hebrews go. He also may have wanted to politicize this event for the people and tell them that tomorrow he was going to do something about the frogs. Probably hidden in this is the fact that it would certainly prove whether or not Moses did have clout with God. If Pharaoh said to Moses, “have the frogs leave tomorrow” and Moses couldn’t do it; then it would prove that he was just another false religious fraud and all the people would see it and know it.

In **verses 10-11**, Moses said the frogs will depart tomorrow and will only be left in the Nile river and then you will know that there is no one like “the LORD our God.”

PLAGUE TWO (Part #6) – How God responded to Moses’ prayer . 8:12-14

Moses cried out to God concerning the frogs and God listened to the prayer of Moses and the frogs died to the point that they heaped them in piles. There was so many that the land had a foul stench to it. Dead frog stink does not make for a good perfume.

PLAGUE TWO (Part #7) – How Pharaoh responded to the elimination of the frogs. 8:15

Moses and Aaron kept their word and God certainly kept His word, but Pharaoh did not keep his word. After promising he would let the Hebrews go, he changed his mind because of a hard heart. What Pharaoh wanted was relief from the frogs and once he had that he was right back to his old self.

We get a glimpse here as to what a hardened heart actually does. It sees clear direct evidence of God and His power, Word and will and then refuses to accept it or submit to it. A hardened heart actually knows the Word of God and work of God, but refuses to yield to it.

SIGN MIRACLE #4 – God causes gnats to infest Egypt. 8:16-19 (PLAGUE #3)

God wasted no time in His next move. He did not warn Pharaoh, he went right after him. He told Moses in **verse 16** to tell Aaron to stretch out his staff and strike the dust of the earth and when Aaron did there were gnats that were on and started biting man and beast.

Now the word “gnat” refers to a tiny biting insect that is able to bite a human or animal and cause burning painful itch and even carry various diseases. Now many believe this was a mosquito type of insect. But for those who have spent time in the south where there is a lot of swampy area and sand, you know that the sand gnats are a painful nuisance.

A couple of year ago, we were at Tybee and the dolphins were swimming in the ocean just ten to twelve feet from shore. Sand gnats were so thick that we had to leave the beach or they would have eaten us alive (which of course is better than eating us when we are dead).

There was and still is a lot of sand in Egypt and it is very possible that these were sand gnats.

According to **verse 17**, when Aaron stretched out his hand and struck the dust of the earth, there was a miraculous, superabundant God-produced gnat population in existence. God turned sand into gnats to the extent that it affected all of Egypt.

Now in **verse 18**, the magicians tried to do something similar but could not do it. The notable difference of this plague is that the magicians could not duplicate it in any way. **The reason why they cannot duplicate it is because God is actually turning dust into insect life. Even if the previous things were satanically done, Satan cannot create life.**

Furthermore, if the previous tricks were illusions, this would explain why the magicians could not do these things. Magicians cannot train gnats and they could not capture gnats so they could even resemble doing anything like this. They certainly cannot make insect life out of something like dust.

According to **verse 19**, the magicians knew this was no illusion. They actually said to Pharaoh, this is the “finger of God.” This is no sleight of hand trickery; this is the hand of God at work.

But instead of Pharaoh saying I had better let the people go, **verse 19** says his heart was hardened and he did not listen to anything Moses and Aaron said, just as God, the “I AM” had said.

SIGN MIRACLE #5 – God causes insects to only attack the Egyptians. **8:20-32**
(**PLAGUE #4**)

In **verse 20**, God tells Moses to get up early and meet Pharaoh at the Nile and tell him to let My people go and tell him that if he will not let them go, I am going to send swarms of insects on you, your servants, your houses and on your ground (**verse 21**); but on the Hebrew people the insects will not touch or go near (**verse 22**). God said to tell Pharaoh that there is a division between My people and your people and if you do not let them go by tomorrow, this is exactly what will happen.

Now the words “swarms of insects” describe an incalculable number. The word “swarm” in these verses is different from the word in **verse 3**. The emphasis of this word is on the fact that everything will be filled to a fullness level with flies (*Ibid.*, p. 474). So we are not talking here about having a few flies at a picnic; we are talking here about everything filled with flies. The actual Hebrew word “insects” (arob) was used as a word referring to “flies.” In fact, in Psalm 78:45 it is translated “swarms of flies.”

Now you would think having just come through the “gnat” plague that Pharaoh would say, “Oh no, not again.” Get out of here. But apparently he didn’t because according to **verse 23**, they gave him a day and when he didn’t do anything, **verse 24** says great swarms of these insects or flies came into the house of Pharaoh and the houses of his servants and the land was laid waste because of all of these bugs. The people could not eat with these flies, they could not sleep without these flies, they could not work without these flies, and they could not even go for a walk without these flies. As one writer said, the skin of these Egyptians must have been welted with fly bites.

We don’t know exactly how long these flies had been in the land, but finally, in **verse 25**, Pharaoh knew he needed the help of Moses and Aaron. **So he called them and tried to negotiate a compromise deal and he tells Moses to go and sacrifice to God within the land.**

But Moses said in **verses 26-27**, we don’t want to do anything to offend the Egyptians and we will sacrifice things you worship. Actually, it appears that Moses is a little weak-legged here. He was never told by God to tell Pharaoh this. But Moses is using this logic to say we need to go three days away so we will be away from the Egyptian mainstream of religion because we don’t want to do anything that is an abomination to Egyptian religion.

Verse 28 says that Pharaoh agreed to let them go a little way away to worship God if Moses would go to God about these flies.

In **verse 29**, Moses said to Pharaoh that he would ask God to remove the bugs by tomorrow, but he warned Pharaoh that he had better not change his mind again.

According to **verses 30-31**, Moses went to the Lord and asked God to remove the insects and God did it.

But then we come to **verse 32**, Pharaoh again hardened his heart and would not let the Hebrews go.

Now here is certainly one thing that we see from this passage, that it is possible to see many displays and evidences of the greatness of God and reject it to the point where you are so hard-hearted to the Word and will of God that you will not submit to it.