

## Exodus Chapter Eight

Read **Exodus 8:1-15** – The Plague of Frogs

**v.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.”

The plague of blood lasted for seven days as we saw in **Exodus 7:25** and then, apparently, God brought it to an end. The time period of the plagues has been studied by many scholars but an Archbishop of the Church of Ireland, James Usher, 1581-1656, is considered by most to be the most accurate. All of the Study Bibles that I have ever owned use his chronology for the dates of happenings in scripture. He places the plague of blood on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of the sixth month of 1491 BC and the plague of the frogs two days after the blood plague ended.

**v.2** “AND IF THOU REFUSE TO LET *them* GO, BEHOLD, I WILL SMITE ALL THY BORDERS WITH FROGS:”

Why frogs? We could probably find several reasons, one being that frogs are repulsive to many people, they're insignificant creatures; but following the pattern set with turning the Nile into blood God is striking at another Egyptian god. From Coffman commentary "...the frog was the symbol of the goddess of fertility in Egypt; 'She was called Hekt', represented in statues as 'a female deity with a frog's head,' and supposed to symbolize, 'the renewal of life.'" He records also that "The frog itself was often worshipped as a symbol of Hekt,..."

**v.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:”

Again God is also using the Nile River, which the Egyptians worshipped, as a source of his plague. These animals would become so abundant that they would be found everywhere in the land. Perhaps we can even imagine what it would be like to find frogs in our houses, our beds, even in the places there we prepare and cook our meals. In the Psalm proclaiming God's wondrous works that he did for Israel the writer refers to this occurrence:

**Psalms 105:30** “THEIR LAND BROUGHT FORTH FROGS IN ABUNDANCE, IN THE CHAMBERS OF THEIR KINGS.”

**v.4** “AND THE FROGS SHALL COME UP BOTH ON THEE, AND UPON THY PEOPLE, AND UPON ALL THY SERVANTS.”

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This affliction would be upon Pharaoh, all of the people of Egypt and their servants. Here we are not told whether Israel and the land of Goshen was affected by these plagues but later they will be specifically excluded.

**v.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.”

So God gives the command to Moses; tell Aaron to take the rod and stretch it over the land to cause frogs to come up, not only from the Nile, but also out of all the streams and ponds that are the water sources of the land.

**v.6** “AND AARON STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND OVER THE WATERS OF EGYPT; AND THE FROGS CAME UP, AND COVERED THE LAND OF EGYPT.”

Aaron did what God commanded and the frogs began to appear. This plague is also mentioned in another Psalm praising God for his goodness to Israel.

**Psalm 78:45** “HE SENT DIVERS SORTS OF FLIES AMONG THEM, WHICH DEVoured THEM; AND FROGS, WHICH DESTROYED THEM.”

**v.7** “AND THE MAGICIANS DID SO WITH THEIR ENCHANTMENTS, AND BROUGHT UP FROGS UPON THE LAND OF EGYPT.”

Again God allows the magicians, or seers, of Egypt to duplicate the miracle that Aaron did. One observation has been made was that they could add to the affliction that God had brought upon Egypt but they could not take it away. Consequently Pharaoh had to call for Moses and Aaron in order for his people to get relief. This is the first crack in the armor of Pharaoh's attitude.

**v.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**.”

“ENTREAT” Jehovah, have your God take away the frogs that are plaguing the entire country of Egypt. Then Pharaoh will do what? He will let the people go and sacrifice unto Jehovah. Pharaoh who up until this point has been completely uninterested in doing anything which God and Israel wanted is now ready to ask Moses and ask God for relief.

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**v.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?”

Scholars have had problems with the language that we find in this verse in the King James Version. As we look at other translations we find that the New King James Version reads “ACCEPT THE HONOR OF SAYING WHEN I SHALL INTERCEDE FOR YOU” and the English Standard Version reads “BE PLEASED TO COMMAND ME WHEN I AM TO PLEAD FOR YOU”. Moses honors Pharaoh by asking for a command but also establishes a specific time when he will pray to God to remove the frogs. When Moses does this he will, by default, verify that it is indeed God who is bringing these plagues and it is only Jehovah God who can remove them.

**v.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.”

So Moses agrees and tells Pharaoh that according to his request that the plague of frogs will end tomorrow. He adds that this should show Pharaoh that there is none like “**THE LORD OUR GOD.**”

This is perhaps a lesson that we all need to hear occasionally to strengthen our own faith. “*there is* NONE LIKE UNTO THE LORD OUR GOD.” Moses uses this phrase twice in the early part of his final address to the Israelite nation.

**Deuteronomy 4:35** “UNTO THEE IT WAS SHEWED, THAT THOU MIGHTEST KNOW THAT THE LORD HE *is* GOD; *there is* NONE ELSE BESIDE HIM.” **v.39** “KNOW THEREFORE THIS DAY, AND CONSIDER *it* IN THINE HEART, THAT THE LORD HE *is* GOD IN HEAVEN ABOVE, AND UPON THE EARTH BENEATH: *there is* NONE ELSE.”

**v.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.”

**v.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.”

One of the things that crossed my mind as I studied is that here Moses is praying for Pharaoh an enemy of Israel, of Moses and of God.

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**v.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.”

At the appointed hour the frogs all died. But did they really go away? No!

**v.14** “AND THEY GATHERED THEM TOGETHER UPON HEAPS: AND THE LAND STANK.”

The frogs are all dead but their presence is still being made obvious throughout the land in a manner that is probably even more obnoxious than when they were alive. They have not been disposed of and the people are simply gathering them into piles of rotting flesh.

**v.15** “BUT WHEN PHARAOH SAW THAT THERE WAS RESPITE, HE HARDENED HIS HEART, AND HEARKENED NOT UNTO THEM; AS THE **LORD** HAD SAID.”

King Pharaoh was just like other people that many of us have encountered during our lifetime. The minute that the heat's off, the minute that whatever punishment that brought about their repentance is removed, they recant and go back to what they were doing before they were disciplined. Israel was described in the same way in a by Asaph:

**Psalms 78:41-42** “YEA, THEY TURNED BACK AND TEMPTED GOD, AND LIMITED THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL. THEY REMEMBERED NOT HIS HAND, *nor* THE DAY WHEN HE DELIVERED THEM FROM THE ENEMY.”

Read **Exodus 8:16-19** – The Plague of Lice

**v.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.”

We observe that there is no warning given to Pharaoh before God brought this plague upon Egypt. Whether this was due to the fact that Pharaoh reneged on his promise to allow Israel to go into the wilderness to worship or whether it was brought without warning to show the relationship between Pharaoh's action and God's wrath is debated by scholars. God brings the plagues of lice, boils and darkness without any prior warning.

Another thing that scholars debate is the translation of the Hebrew word into other languages. Some contend that instead of lice it should be gnats, others ticks and the Jerusalem Bible (which is a modern Catholic version) calls them mosquitoes.

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**v.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.”

Again the God of heaven causes one of the objects of creation that the Egyptians worship to become their tormentor. The first was brought against the Nile River, the second against frogs and now the third against the earth. Much as modern day environmentalists worship the earth today, the soil of the Nile valley was worshipped as the father of gods. Most sacred was the rich, black soil of the Nile delta, where the land of Goshen was located.

**v.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.”

Pharaoh and his magicians or seers are still working to try to negate the effect of the power of God by duplicating each plague. With the plague of lice, they failed. Consequently they must report to Pharaoh something that we can be assured he did not want to hear.

**v.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.”

Thus the magicians and advisor to Pharaoh are forced to admit that there is a higher power involved in these plagues. They cannot duplicate the plague of lice. However, most of the commentators contend that the translation is incorrect. They say the magicians are not referring to Jehovah, God Almighty but rather to a god, someone who possessed a higher power than they did.

We noted earlier in our study that the source of the power of the Egyptian magicians was not the God of heaven but rather his archenemy, Satan. Just as with the example of Job; God will allow our adversary to go just so far and no further. Matthew Henry writes that God has Satan on a chain, like a leash on a mean dog and limits his power as both a deceiver and a destroyer. I personally believe that this kind of limitation of Satan's power is the subject of:

**Revelation 20:2** “AND HE LAID HOLD ON THE DRAGON, THAT OLD SERPENT, WHICH IS THE DEVIL, AND SATAN, AND BOUND HIM A THOUSAND YEARS,”

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The power of Satan over mankind through sin has been bound by our ability to go to God in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and remove our sin through obedience to his commandments. His power to perform miracles and works of that nature was ended when the gifts of the Holy Spirit ended.

Read **Exodus 8:20-32** – The Plague of Flies

**v.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.”

In the chronology developed by Archbishop Ussher, only eleven days have passed since the first plague was brought against the Egyptians. The plague of blood lasted seven days:

**Exodus 7:25** “AND SEVEN DAYS WERE FULFILLED, AFTER THAT THE **LORD** HAD SMITTEN THE RIVER.”

Or at least that is what is implied by this scripture. Meanwhile the frogs, while dead, are making the land stink and there is nothing in scripture that indicates that the plague of lice has been ended. So our conclusion is that God has increased the pressure on Pharaoh by allowing the effects of the plagues to continue, rather than removing each one before bringing the next one.

Coffman also makes note in his commentary that before now Moses probably approached Pharaoh as one would any absolute ruler bowing and following the customs required by a subject of the king. Now God tells Moses to “STAND BEFORE PHARAOH”, indicating an equality that had not been commanded before. After all Moses is the ambassador of Jehovah God.

**v.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.”

Moses delivers God’s ultimatum, let my people go or I will bring a plague of flies. When I read this I think of what is called a “deer fly” that is found in various locations in this country. The deer fly is a small, aggressive creature whose bite is almost as bad as a fire ant’s sting. Some contend that this plague is against the atmosphere, and that the Egyptians worship that as well. Others contend that instead of flies the original Hebrew word refers to the beetle that was used to represent the Egyptian god of life or reproductive powers.

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This is the same kind of beetle we see on scarabs found in archeological excavations of that period. If so we might consider the hard shelled beetle that is prevalent here as a representative of what Egypt endured. Others contend that the original Hebrew would include various kinds of flying insects, this contention is supported by:

**Psalms 78:45** "HE SENT DIVERS SORTS OF FLIES AMONG THEM, WHICH DEVoured THEM; AND FROGS, WHICH DESTROYED THEM."

**v.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."

From the words of this verse we can only conclude that the prior plagues of blood, frogs and lice was also brought upon the Israelites. Now God is going to display his power to afflict Egypt and to set aside, protect his people living in Goshen. His purpose is to remove any doubt that He is the sovereign ruler of all the earth and all that lives thereon.

**v.23** "AND I WILL PUT A DIVISION BETWEEN MY PEOPLE AND THY PEOPLE: TO MORROW SHALL THIS SIGN BE."

Now Israel is truly set aside, sequestered as it were in the land of Goshen. From this verse can we also conclude that the oppression of Israel has ended; that they are no longer making bricks; no longer serving the Egyptian people in any fashion? I think so, otherwise they would be suffering along with the Egyptian people.

**v.24** "AND THE **LORD** DID SO; AND THERE CAME A GRIEVOUS SWARM OF FLIES INTO THE HOUSE OF PHARAOH, AND INTO HIS SERVANTS' HOUSES, AND INTO ALL THE LAND OF EGYPT: THE LAND WAS CORRUPTED BY REASON OF THE SWARM OF FLIES."

"AND THE **LORD** DID SO" giving us once again an assurance that God will do what he says he will do. Also we have no indication that the plague of lice has been stopped by God so it would appear that Egypt is suffering from both lice and the host of flying insects. The land was "CORRUPTED" or spoiled by their swarming, the land of Egypt, that is, because the land of Goshen where Israel resides was spared.

**v.25** "AND PHARAOH CALLED FOR MOSES AND FOR AARON, AND SAID, GO YE, SACRIFICE TO YOUR GOD IN THE LAND."

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Pharaoh's veneer is starting to crack. This is the fourth of ten plagues to come and he is ready to let Israel sacrifice and worship God in the land of Egypt. He no longer seems to be concerned about their taking away their time from the tasks that he had laid upon them. He just wants this affliction to end but, without doubt as soon as it does he will have a relapse into his prior mindset.

**v.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?"

Moses presents an argument to Pharaoh telling him why that Israel could not worship God in Egypt. Quite simply, Israel could not sacrifice or worship in the manner of the Egyptians because that would be an abomination to God. They couldn't worship or sacrifice as God required because the Egyptians worshiped the animals that Israel would slaughter and sacrifice to God. The ox, bull or cow were all representations of Egyptian gods. The people of Egypt would never allow such sacrifices to take place and those Israelites who attempted to worship would be killed.

**v.27** "WE WILL GO THREE DAYS' JOURNEY INTO THE WILDERNESS, AND SACRIFICE TO THE **LORD** OUR GOD, AS HE SHALL COMMAND US."

So Moses turns down Pharaoh's offer and repeats the demand that God had him bring before the king originally; let us go into the wilderness to sacrifice. In the wilderness they could sacrifice as God had commanded them without any interference with anyone.

This demand by God should remind us of a prohibition that God has given us as Christians today. In order to serve God properly Israel needed to separate herself from Egypt, just as in Canaan she would have to separate herself from her pagan neighbors.

**Deuteronomy 7:2-3** "AND WHEN THE **LORD** THY GOD SHALL DELIVER THEM BEFORE THEE; THOU SHALT SMITE THEM, AND UTTERLY DESTROY THEM; THOU SHALT MAKE NO COVENANT WITH THEM, NOR SHEW MERCY UNTO THEM: NEITHER SHALT THOU MAKE MARRIAGES WITH THEM; THY DAUGHTER THOU SHALT NOT GIVE UNTO HIS SON, NOR HIS DAUGHTER SHALT THOU TAKE UNTO THY SON."

Likewise, in order to serve God properly today we need to separate ourselves from the world as Paul writes:



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**II Corinthians 6:14** “BE YE NOT UNEQUALLY YOKED TOGETHER WITH UNBELIEVERS: FOR WHAT FELLOWSHIP HATH RIGHTEOUSNESS WITH UNRIGHTEOUSNESS? AND WHAT COMMUNION HATH LIGHT WITH DARKNESS?”

**v.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.”

We see another chink coming in Pharaoh's armor. He is now willing for them to go into the wilderness to sacrifice and worship God but “don't go very far”. He doesn't want to let them out of his control. Then Pharaoh makes a request that is totally out of character. What is that? He asks Moses to “INTREAT” or pray for him.

**v.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**.”

Moses agrees to go and to pray to God to remove the plagues of the flies but warns Pharaoh to not renege again.

**v.30** “AND MOSES WENT OUT FROM PHARAOH, AND INTREATED THE **LORD**.”

**v.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.”

God answered Moses prayer and removes the plague but what does Pharaoh do?

**v.32** “AND PHARAOH HARDENED HIS HEART AT THIS TIME ALSO, NEITHER WOULD HE LET THE PEOPLE GO.”

Pharaoh acts true to form; the minute that the pressure is off he reneges again, hardens his heart and refuses to carry out his side of the bargain.