

JUNE 19th
GOD'S FINGER DESTROYS SATAN

"The magicians tried by their secret arts to produce gnats, but they could not. So there were gnats on man and beast. Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said." EXODUS 8:18-19

Mosquitoes. Maggots. Lice. Gnats. All insects that invade. They disrupt. They annoy. No one says a prayer for God to bring these insects to us. Well, at least not anyone now. But the Egyptian magicians did that very thing. They were called on by Pharaoh again to replicate the miracle, but this time they couldn't produce these insects. Ever wondered what these insects were? Many translations give the rendering "gnats." However, according to Phil Ryken, the modern Hebrew word means "lice," which is how the King James Version translates it. The first Greek translations of the Old Testament translated the word "gnats." In addition, the text describes this plague as "gnats on men and beast." Whatever the insect is, we do know the harassing effect that it would cause. Pharaoh wanted them gone, but the magicians come and again try to repeat what Moses and Aaron have done! What is their conclusion, and what does it teach us?

We discover in the text that the magicians claim that "this is the finger of God." Even as Pharaoh still doesn't release the Hebrews, we can still see the supremacy of God here. They were able to repeat the first few signs, but not anymore. This shows Pharaoh and the magicians that there is only one God. As we've discussed in prior devotions, each sign is an act of judgment against the false gods of the Egyptians. Exodus 12:12 states: "For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord." God shows them here that He is the one true God...and He shows us.

There's two key points to notice here in Exodus 8. First of all, God controls the plagues perfectly. Starting at the next plague of flies, these signs and wonders do not effect the Hebrews in Goshen. God has ultimate power to control what He does and where He does it. Secondly, this finger of God shows ultimate authority even over Satan. We've touched on this in past devotions about Satan being conquered by God. Even further, we see here that while Satan possesses power, His power is limited. God's power is never limited, and He defeats the power of Satan. Take a road trip with me into the world of Biblical theology for a moment. The greatest power in the known world at that time held the Hebrews as slaves. God broke the chain of slavery by completely decimating the economy and power of Pharaoh and Egypt. God purposed to free His people, and he could not be stopped. This action in Exodus points forward to a new Exodus of God's people. Except this time it's not about the promised land of Canaan. This time it's about the freedom from our sin and entrance into the promised land of heaven.

Men, this gives us hope. Satan continues to "plague" us with discouragements and temptations. But God. God's work cannot be stopped. Satan is defeated with the finger of God. This is what Jesus meant when He said in Luke 11: "...But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you...". Jesus work completes the death blow. He crushes the head of Satan. Yes, he remains a nuisance that tries to steal our joy, but Jesus gives us the final victory. Be confident in Jesus' finished work! This is your God!

Spend some time thinking about what the cross and resurrection accomplished for you. Now ask God to help you live like it's true (which it is!)

For Further Reading: Luke 11:14-23