

EXODUS CHAPTER 7-8

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 Updated 12/15/2023 CPS
 Printed 12/15/2023

God has raised up a prophet in Moses and has sent him to the king of Egypt. God intends to have the Pharaoh release the nation of Israel from bondage. Moses and his brother Aaron have confronted the Pharaoh and their request has been rejected. In these chapters the huge conflict begins between the God of Heaven and the king of Egypt. The Lord will unleash His frightful power on Egypt, one step at a time.

In these chapters, we will view the first four plagues.

From the previous chapter:

(28) When the LORD spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, (29) He said to him, "I am the LORD! Tell Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, everything I am telling you." (30) But Moses argued with the LORD, saying, "I can't do it! I'm such a clumsy speaker! Why should Pharaoh listen to me?"

- **Moses** made another objection to being a spokesman before the **Pharaoh**. **The Lord** did not directly address it.

MOSES AND AARON TALK TO PHARAOH A SECOND TIME

(7:1) Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pay close attention to this. I will make you seem like God to Pharaoh, and your brother, Aaron, will be your prophet.

- **God** points out that **Moses** is His representative to **Pharaoh** and that **Aaron** will be **Moses' prophet**.

(2) Tell Aaron everything I command you, and Aaron must command Pharaoh to let the people of Israel leave his country.

- God will write the script and that is what is to be repeated to the reluctant king. God will win.

(3) But I will make Pharaoh's heart stubborn so I can multiply My miraculous signs and wonders in the land of Egypt.

- But don't expect change from **Pharaoh**. This is where the Lord will show His power as never before throughout all of **Egypt**.

(4) Even then Pharaoh will refuse to listen to you. So I will bring down My fist on Egypt. Then I will rescue My forces—My people, the Israelites—from the land of Egypt with great acts of judgment.

- The Lord will use His **great acts of judgment** to bring out the sons of **Israel** from **the land**.

(5) When I raise My powerful hand and bring out the Israelites, the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD."

- The **Egyptians** will learn about a new god: **the Lord**.

(6) So Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD had commanded them. (7) Moses was eighty years old, and Aaron was eighty-three when they made their demands to Pharaoh.

- This is the second encounter with the stubborn **Pharaoh**.

THE STAFF BECAME A SERPENT BEFORE PHARAOH

(8) Then the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, (9) "Pharaoh will demand, 'Show me a miracle.' When he does this, say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and throw it down in front of Pharaoh, and it will become a serpent.'"

- **Moses** had already tested the sign of just using his **staff** and now he is repeating it in front of **Pharaoh**. The **serpent** is a national symbol of Egypt.

(10) So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did what the LORD had commanded them. Aaron threw down his staff before Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a serpent! (11) Then Pharaoh called in his own wise men and sorcerers, and these Egyptian magicians did the same thing with their magic. (12) They threw down their staffs, which also became serpents! But then Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs.

- **Pharaoh** was impressed. He **summoned** his advisory personnel and found they could do the same miracle. But **Aaron's staff swallowed** the others. This was a message the stubborn **Pharaoh** ignored.
- The apostle Paul names these magicians in 2 Timothy:
These teachers oppose the truth just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses. They have depraved minds and a counterfeit faith. (2 Timothy 3:8 NLT)

(13) Pharaoh's heart, however, remained hard. He still refused to listen, just as the LORD had predicted. (14) Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh's heart is stubborn, and he still refuses to let the people go."

- **The Lord** had said that the old boy would not listen. So **Moses** and Aaron were seeing **the Lord** had foretold correctly. This merely opened the door to more powerful and persuasive signs from **the Lord**.

#1 WATER IN THE NILE TURNED TO BLOOD

(15) So go to Pharaoh in the morning as he goes down to the river. Stand on the bank of the Nile and meet him there. Be sure to take along the staff that turned into a snake.

- The **Nile** river was sacred and the **Pharaoh** went there often. Moses and Aaron were to **meet** him at this sacred place and **take** their **staff**. God's men are taking the battle right into Egypt's sacred territory.

(16) Then announce to him, "The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has sent me to tell you, "Let My people go, so they can worship Me in the wilderness." Until now, you have refused to listen to Him.

- They were to annoy the self-described god with a command from the **God of the Hebrews** that Pharaoh says he doesn't even know about.

(17) So this is what the LORD says: "I will show you that I am the LORD." Look! I will strike the water of the Nile with this staff in my hand, and the river will turn to blood.

- **The Lord** now warns that He will **strike** the sacred **Nile** and turn it to **blood**. The battle is moving beyond the Pharaoh to **strike** the sacred river.

Was this real human **blood** like could be used in a **blood** transfusion? It was at the least something that looked like **blood**. Moses didn't say if he was using the word **blood** literally or figuratively. It makes sense to this writer to say figuratively. The color was certainly red but whatever it was could be filtered to be drinkable water as seen in verse 24. The fish died in the bloody-looking liquid, but after it was filtered through the sand near the Nile, it was usable. Other Bible writers used the word blood figuratively, so there are grounds for the conclusion within Scripture.

(18) The fish in it will die, and the river will stink. The Egyptians will not be able to drink any water from the Nile.

- **The fish**, an important food supply, will **die**. The sacred river will **stink**. The nation's **drinking water** will be impacted.

(19) Then the LORD said to Moses: "Tell Aaron, 'Take your staff and raise your hand over the waters of Egypt — all its rivers, canals, ponds, and all the reservoirs. Turn all the water to blood. Everywhere in Egypt the water will turn to blood, even the water stored in wooden bowls and stone pots.'"

- **Aaron** is to take action to pollute the nation's drinking **water**. The action was not limited to the Nile River.

(20) So Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD commanded them. As Pharaoh and all of his officials watched, Aaron raised his staff and struck the water of the Nile. Suddenly, the whole river turned to blood!

- The powerless **Pharaoh** could only watch as Egypt's **water** supply was contaminated. He was seeing the power of a God he had not even acknowledged as existing.
- Egypt's god *Heket*, the goddess of water, was not in control. The God of the Hebrews was in control of the sacred **Nile**.

(21) The fish in the river died, and the water became so foul that the Egyptians couldn't drink it. There was blood everywhere throughout the land of Egypt. (22) But again the magicians of Egypt used their magic, and they, too, turned water into blood. So Pharaoh's heart remained hard. He refused to listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the LORD had predicted. (23) Pharaoh returned to his palace and put the whole thing out of his mind.

- **The Egyptian** magician had something they could do that imitated this sign, so **Pharaoh** did not change his

heart. The **magician** evidently could not change the **blood** back into drinkable water again.

(24) Then all the Egyptians dug along the riverbank to find drinking water, for they couldn't drink the water from the Nile. (25) Seven days passed from the time the LORD struck the Nile.

- This miracle lasted **seven days.** It got the attention of every **Egyptian.** They could dig and find drinking **water.** The **water** at a distance from **Nile** was filtered through sand and drinkable.
- Just the delta of the **Nile** is nearly 150 miles wide and 125 miles long. This was a huge miracle.

#2 FROGS EVERYWHERE

(8:1) Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go back to Pharaoh and announce to him, "This is what the LORD says: Let My people go, so they can worship Me. (2) If you refuse to let them go, I will send a plague of frogs across your entire land. (3) The Nile River will swarm with frogs. They will come up out of the river and into your palace, even into your bedroom and onto your bed! They will enter the houses of your officials and your people. They will even jump into your ovens and your kneading bowls. (4) Frogs will jump on you, your people, and all your officials."

- **Moses** was to repeat the ultimatum for God's **people** to be released from Egypt or God would send **frogs.** They would be everywhere in Egypt including Pharaoh's **house.**
- **Wilbur Fields** tells the



Egyptian view of **frogs**.

“Frogs were highly regarded before this plague. Each September after the summer overflowing of the Nile had gone down, frogs would become numerous in ponds of water all over Egypt. Their croaking was a reminder that the gods have done their duty again as another fruitful year lay before them.”

- The goddess here may have been *Heket* also. This plague from the Lord was also against an Egyptian deity.

(5) Then the LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'Raise the staff in your hand over all the rivers, canals, and ponds of Egypt, and bring up frogs over all the land.'" (6) So Aaron raised his hand over the waters of Egypt, and frogs came up and covered the whole land!

- Powerless Pharaoh turned down the warning and **Aaron** took action. That **staff** was used again and there were **frogs** everywhere. No mention is made of having **frog** legs for dinner.

(7) But the magicians were able to do the same thing with their magic. They, too, caused frogs to come up on the land of Egypt.

- Amazingly, the official **magicians** did the same. But Pharaoh is weakening.

(8) Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and begged, "Plead with the LORD to take the frogs away from me and my people. I will let your people go, so they can offer sacrifices to the LORD."

- **Pharaoh** asked **Moses and Aaron** to intercede with the **Lord** about **the frogs** and he would **let the people go** away **to sacrifice to the Lord**.

- The **frogs** were not merely an inconvenience, they were destructive. Psalm 78:45 speaks of the frogs that "destroyed them." People could not work, or sleep, or eat, or move about without the dreadful interference from the **frogs. Frogs** leaped upon and crawled over people wherever they were. **Pharaoh** learned that he was dealing with a God who was in a bigger league than the games he had attended. In this verse he begins and ends his reply using the name of the God that he didn't even believe existed a short time back.

(9) "You set the time!" Moses replied. "Tell me when you want me to pray for you, your officials, and your people. Then you and your houses will be rid of the frogs. They will remain only in the Nile River."

- **Moses** insisted on setting a **time** for his **pleading** with the **Lord**. He wasn't going to be put off.

(10) "Do it tomorrow," Pharaoh said. "All right," Moses replied, "it will be as you have said. Then you will know that there is no one like the LORD our God."

- By setting a time, **Pharaoh** could not call the removing of the frogs a coincidence. This would be additional evidence that the **God** of the Hebrews was doing this.

(11) The frogs will leave you and your houses, your officials, and your people. They will remain only in the Nile River."

- The plague of **frogs** would end with **frogs** remaining only in the **Nile** where they belonged.

(12) So Moses and Aaron left Pharaoh's palace, and Moses cried out to the LORD about the frogs He had inflicted on Pharaoh. (13) And the LORD did just what Moses had predicted. The frogs in the houses, the

courtyards, and the fields all died. (14) The Egyptians piled them into great heaps, and a terrible stench filled the land.

- All of **Egypt** had a smelly reminder of the power of the Hebrew's God. Sin can leave a very bad odor.

(15) But when Pharaoh saw that relief had come, he became stubborn. He refused to listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the LORD had predicted.

- **Pharaoh** got some **relief** from the frogs, changed his mind and broke his promise. **The Lord** had said this would happen.

#3 GNATS EVERYWHERE

(16) So the LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'Raise your staff and strike the ground. The dust will turn into swarms of gnats throughout the land of Egypt.'"

- The shepherd's **staff** was kept busy. **Egyptians** hated shepherds and sheep raising and here was a tool of that trade insulting the haters.
- While previous plagues had forewarnings, none is reported for this infestation.



(17) So Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD had commanded them. When Aaron raised his hand and struck the ground with his staff, gnats infested the entire land, covering the Egyptians and their animals. All the dust in the land of Egypt turned into gnats.

- **Gnats** were everywhere **in Egypt** including on Pharaoh. He knew where they came from.

(18) Pharaoh's magicians tried to do the same thing with their secret arts, but this time they failed. And the gnats covered everyone, people and animals alike.

- The Egyptian **magicians** could not duplicate this miracle so they had to fight the **gnats** along with the rest. Imagine how their animals behaved covered with **gnats**.

(19) "This is the finger of God!" the magicians exclaimed to Pharaoh. But Pharaoh's heart remained hard. He wouldn't listen to them, just as the LORD had predicted.

- Now **Pharaoh's** own advisers see **the finger of the God** of the Hebrews. But **Pharaoh** didn't want to be bothered with the facts. The local diety was *Khepri*, the god of creation.
- The first three plagues related to the Nile River: fish, frogs and mosquitoes. Next, God will increase the pressure with more personal inconveniences.

#4 FLIES EVERYWHERE

(20) Then the LORD told Moses, "Get up early in the morning and stand in Pharaoh's way as he goes down to the river. Say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: Let My people go, so they can worship Me. (21) If you refuse, then I will send swarms of flies on you, your officials, your people, and all the houses. The Egyptian homes will be filled with flies, and the ground will be covered with them.

- **The Lord** had **Moses** order **Pharaoh** to let His people leave Egypt. The penalty would be **flies** in **Egyptian houses**.
- This would be the dog-**fly** or the stable-**fly**. It had a sharp



and painful bite that sometimes caused inflammation.

(22) But this time I will spare the region of Goshen, where My people live. No flies will be found there. Then you will know that I am the LORD and that I am present even in the heart of your land. (23) I will make a clear distinction between My people and your people. This miraculous sign will happen tomorrow."

- **This time**, there would be no **flies in Goshen**, where the most of Israel lived. It would happen the next day. It is possible that **Goshen** was exempt from the earlier plagues.

(24) And the LORD did just as He had said. A thick swarm of flies filled Pharaoh's palace and the houses of his officials. The whole land of Egypt was thrown into chaos by the flies.

- **The swarms of flies** caused **chaos**. *Hathor*, goddess of protection may have been the deity in charge as Egyptian viewed the world.

(25) Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron. "All right! Go ahead and offer sacrifices to your God," he said. "But do it here in this land."

- Now **Pharaoh** walked back his refusal and told **Moses** and **Aaron** to **sacrifice to God**, but **within** Egypt.

(26) But Moses replied, "That wouldn't be right. The Egyptians detest the sacrifices that we offer to the LORD our God. Look, if we offer our sacrifices here where the Egyptians can see us, they will stone us. (27) We must take a three-day trip into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God, just as He has commanded us."

- **Moses** did not accept the offer. He gave reason why the plan would not work. This is the first of four compromises offered by Pharaoh.

(28) "All right, go ahead," Pharaoh replied. "I will let you go into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to the LORD your God. But don't go too far away. Now hurry and pray for me."

- **Pharaoh** didn't want Israel to travel **far** and while they were in touch with their **God**, **pray** for him. He hated the flies. This was compromise offer number two. **Pharaoh** reneged on this deal shortly.

(29) Moses answered, "As soon as I leave you, I will pray to the LORD, and tomorrow the swarms of flies will disappear from you and your officials and all your people. But I am warning you, Pharaoh, don't lie to us again and refuse to let the people go to sacrifice to the LORD."

- **Moses** agreed, but warned **Pharaoh** not to cheat on his promise like he did before. This was pretty brassy for men from the slave class talking to a person who thought he was a god.

(30) So Moses left Pharaoh's palace and pleaded with the LORD to remove all the flies. (31) And the LORD did as Moses asked and caused the swarms of flies to disappear from Pharaoh, his officials, and his people. Not a single fly remained. (32) But Pharaoh again became stubborn and refused to let the people go.

- Pray from **Moses** is involved. **Moses** believed **Pharaoh**, but the stubborn ruler reneged on his word again. The **Lord's** escalation continues in the next chapter.