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Teaching Notes

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Frogs, Gnats, Flies

Exodus 8

I. The Frogs Come at the Word of God

Exodus 8:1-7 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me. 2 If you refuse to let them go, I will plague your whole country with frogs. 3 The Nile will teem with frogs. They will come up into your palace and your bedroom and onto your bed, into the houses of your officials and on your people, and into your ovens and kneading troughs. 4 The frogs will go up on you and your people and all your officials.'" 5 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'Stretch out your hand with your staff over the streams and canals and ponds, and make frogs come up on the land of Egypt.'" 6 So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land. 7 But the magicians did the same things by their secret arts; they also made frogs come up on the land of Egypt.

A. The Interaction Begins: God's Repeated Command, Coupled with Threat

1. God continues to uphold Pharaoh's right to rule... to make the decision on the slaves
2. God's sense of ownership:

Let my people go...

3. God's purpose:

"That they may worship me"

4. God's threat:

If you refuse, I will plague your whole country with frogs

5. Details vividly depicted
 - a. scope of the plague: your whole country
 - b. source of the plague: the Nile will teem with frogs

c. severity of the plague: into your homes

They will come up into your palace and your bedroom and onto your bed, into the houses of your officials and on your people, and into your ovens and kneading troughs. 4 The frogs will go up on you and your people and all your officials."

d. significance of the plague

Frogs represent uncleanness and evil

Ugly shape, putrid smell, croaking noise

Frogs were connected with the most ancient forms of nature-worship in Egypt, and there was even a female deity with a frog's head. Thus, in targeting frogs, God struck at one of their false gods;

b) frogs are born in mud and live in mud. Therefore, they are a symbol of those who are born in, and live in, sin;

c) The frogs went everywhere. Into the homes and kitchens, even into the bedchambers of the rulers *see also Ps. 105:30.*

Psalm 105:30 Their land teemed with frogs, which went up into the bedrooms of their rulers.

The future:

Revelation 16:13-14 Then I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14 They are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.

B. God Keeps His Word (vs. 5-6)

vs. 5-6 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'Stretch out your hand with your staff over the streams and canals and ponds, and make frogs come up on the land of Egypt.'" 6 So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land.

1. God no idle boaster... what He has said, He will do

Isaiah 14:24 The LORD Almighty has sworn, "Surely, as I have planned, so it will be, and as I have purposed, so it will stand.

2. This is the great lesson of Exodus... God means what He says and says what He means
3. Let no man underestimate God's truthfulness

C. Demonic Imitation

vs. 7 But the magicians did the same things by their secret arts; they also made frogs come up on the land of Egypt.

Again, the magicians cannot REVERSE the curse, only make it worse. Satan cannot reverse the evil His influence has caused, but only increase it greatly.

All the magicians did was "more frogs"... but they served the purpose of giving Pharaoh an out to disbelieve the Lord and disobey His command

II. The Frogs Go at the Word of God (vs. 8-15)

vs. 8-15 Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "Pray to the LORD to take the frogs away from me and my people, and I will let your people go to offer sacrifices to the LORD."

9 Moses said to Pharaoh, "I leave to you the honor of setting the time for me to pray for you and your officials and your people that you and your houses may be rid of the frogs, except for those that remain in the Nile." 10 "Tomorrow," Pharaoh said. Moses replied, "It will be as you say, so that you may know there is no one like the LORD our God. 11 The frogs will leave you and your houses, your officials and your people; they will remain only in the Nile." 12 After Moses and Aaron left Pharaoh, Moses cried out to the LORD about the frogs he had brought on Pharaoh. 13 And the LORD did what Moses asked. The frogs died in the houses, in the courtyards and in the fields. 14 They were piled into heaps, and the land reeked of them. 15 But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the LORD had said.

III. The Finger of God: The Dust Becomes Gnats (vs. 16-19)

16 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the ground,' and throughout the land of Egypt the dust will become gnats."

17 They did this, and when Aaron stretched out his hand with the staff and struck the dust of the ground, gnats came upon men and animals. All the dust throughout the land of Egypt became gnats.

- NOTE: no warning this time... God just does it!

- Life from inanimate material!! Only God can do this
- The exact same way He made man to begin with:

Genesis 2:7 the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

- Evolutionary theory thinks somehow life can come from inanimate material
- The failure of the magicians shows the limitations of their power, and the great power of God

18 But when the magicians tried to produce gnats by their secret arts, they could not. And the gnats were on men and animals. 19 The magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hard and he would not listen, just as the LORD had said.

- Amazing how small a matter brought total consternation to these counterfeit miracle-workers

Jeremiah 12:5 "If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses? If you stumble in safe country, how will you manage in the thickets by the Jordan?"

- These are the last recorded words of the magicians, although we will see them further humbled later on
- This plague must have been obnoxious to the exceptionally clean Egyptians
- Herodotus, ancient historian:

"So scrupulous were the priests on this point that they used to shave their heads and bodies every third day for fear of harboring vermin while occupied in their sacred duties."

Another commentator: "This stroke would therefore humble their pride and stain their glory, rendering themselves objects of dislike and disgust."

IV. Swarms of Flies: (vs. 20-32)

- A. A New Series of Plagues... the first cycle of three is completed
- B. Again, God resorts to warning Pharaoh first
- C. "Flies" not actually found in the Hebrew... it is literally "Swarms"... Hebrew word signifies a "mixture"... a mixed multitude of insects

KJV Psalm 78:45 He sent divers sorts of flies among them, which devoured them; and frogs, which destroyed them.

20 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Get up early in the morning and confront Pharaoh as he goes to the water and say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me.

21 If you do not let my people go, I will send swarms of flies on you and your officials, on your people and into your houses. The houses of the Egyptians will be full of flies, and even the ground where they are.

D. BUT For the first time... a distinction made between Israel and Egypt (vs. 22-23)

22 "But on that day I will deal differently with the land of Goshen, where my people live; no swarms of flies will be there, so that you will know that I, the LORD, am in this land.

23 I will make a distinction between my people and your people. This miraculous sign will occur tomorrow."

24 And the LORD did this. Dense swarms of flies poured into Pharaoh's palace and into the houses of his officials, and throughout Egypt the land was ruined by the flies.

E. For the First time... Pharaoh starts to compromise

25 Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "Go, sacrifice to your God here in the land."

26 But Moses said, "That would not be right. The sacrifices we offer the LORD our God would be detestable to the Egyptians. And if we offer sacrifices that are detestable in their eyes, will they not stone us?

27 We must take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God, as he commands us."

28 Pharaoh said, "I will let you go to offer sacrifices to the LORD your God in the desert, but you must not go very far. Now pray for me."

29 Moses answered, "As soon as I leave you, I will pray to the LORD, and tomorrow the flies will leave Pharaoh and his officials and his people. Only be sure that Pharaoh does not act deceitfully again by not letting the people go to offer sacrifices to the LORD."

30 Then Moses left Pharaoh and prayed to the LORD,

31 and the LORD did what Moses asked: The flies left Pharaoh and his officials and his people; not a fly remained.

32 But this time also Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not let the people go.