PHARAOH AND THE FINGER OF GOD

**DATE: 7/29/2018 pm**

**TEXT: Exodus 8:16-19 (stand, read)**

**INTRODUCTION**

We now come to the 3rd Plague brought on Egypt because of Pharaoh’s refusal to let God’s people go

A Tug of War is fun to compete in and even funnier to watch, especially when both sides are evenly matched

In Exodus, a Tug of War (if you will) has been taking place,

But the sides are definitely not even

On one side is Pharaoh and his magicians

And on the other, is Moses and God

The king was told to let God's people go and Pharaoh tugged

The Lord tugged back by turning the Nile into blood

The king was told again to let the people go

Pharaoh tugs again and the Lord tugs back by bringing frogs up out of the river

Frogs were everywhere ... in the pillows, pies, palace, parlors, pots, pans, and pants

Pharaoh is finally frustrated, flustered, and flabbergasted and faints to be free of the frogs

He tells Moses - *“I'll let you go but get the frogs out first!”*

Moses says ok, when? Pharaoh says *tomorrow*

I guess, Pharaoh had to have one more night with the Frogs

The frogs were removed, but Pharaoh hardened his heart and broke his promise

Pharaoh tugs again and we see God tugging back

Last time we looked at **“Pharaoh and the Frogs”**

This time let’s look at **“Pharaoh and the Finger of God”**

**~~~Prayer~~~**

**I. THE “INSECTS IN THE SAND” – vs. 16, 17**

As this plague is sent, there is no warning with it

I don’t know if you remember but I taught in an earlier message that the Plagues come in 3 cycles of 3

The last plague in each of these cycles, comes without warning

The Lord has warned and warned, yet, Pharaoh continues to resist

Now, He sends this third Plague without warning

**Proverbs 29:1 –** **“*He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy”***

Judgment is unavoidable if you will not obey the warnings

There is a change in this judgment

In the first 2 judgments, the Plagues came from the River

This one comes from the Land

As God controls the drops of water,

He also controls the grains of sand / He’s God

As King Jehoshaphat prayed in **II Chronicles 20:6 – *“… O LORD God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand Thee?”***

**A. The ‘Phonies’**

The Lord is again demonstrating by this Plague, that He is the Lord of Heaven and Earth

And that the gods of Egypt are nothing but Phonies and Fakes

**1.** Their gods

Jehovah is mocking the Egyptian gods

This plague would have mocked several Egyptian deities

Geb - The Egyptian earth god

 Set - The god of the desert

Chem - The name given to the soil

Yes, Dirt was considered sacred too

It was the source from which all food grew

But now their Dust as becomes a source of Disgust, Disdain, Disappointment, Discomfort, and Disillusionment

God is showing them that their trust is in Phony things

**2.** Our gods

You may not be aware of it but we’re just like the Egyptians when it comes to our Phony gods

Our gods have other names

They are called Pride, Achievement, Self-Reliant, and Possessions

If we look to these petty things for satisfaction and fulfillment, we too, will be miserable like the Egyptians

All these things are fleeing / short lived

Our little gods are only dust (as well)

The Egyptian soil has gone from being a source of Comfort to a Curse

It was infested with Lice

Their security has been turned into insecurity and sorrow

The Egyptians adored the gods they worshiped

Imagine now confused and disillusioned they became

-- Why is this happening?

-- What has happened to our gods?

The more they reverenced these gods, the harder it was to take

Egypt would not let Israel worship, now this Plague will not let Egypt worship

This is a shocking time for them

It will also be so, for those who die without Jesus

Those who depend upon themselves, their deeds, their works, memberships, catechisms, baptisms, arguments, reasoning, or any other thing, will be shocked when they stand before the Lord Jesus Christ in judgment one day

Excuses like *“But I thought...”* or *“I was told...”* will be of no value then

Those without Christ will be without excuse

Paul made this very clear in …

**Romans 1:18-20 - “*... For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;” “Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them” “For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:”***

**Egypt’s ‘Phony’ gods**

**B. The ‘Priest’**

This judgment was aimed also at the priests

Lice would have been despicable to all Egyptians,

But Especially to the priests who prided themselves in cleanliness

The priests in Egypt were noted for their physical purity

Daily rites were performed by a group of priests known as the *Uab* or *'pure ones'*

Their purity was physical rather than spiritual

They shaved the hair from their bodies, to avoid being infested

They were circumcised, washed frequently, and were dressed in beautiful linen robes

Now they find themselves the objects of disgust

They are unclean for their worship and sacred duties

Even their sacred animals are infested with Lice

God aimed an arrow at the heart of their religious system because they would not let His people worship Him

**The Priest**

**C. The ‘Pest’**

What about these Lice? What were these creatures?

The word ***“lice”*** comes from a Hebrew root word which means *to cover, to nip, or pinch*

Many scholars suggest they were possibly mosquitos or stinging gnats that molested the Egyptians

They did this by flying into their ears, eyes and nostrils, thus driving them crazy

The blood in the waters and the heaps of dead frogs may have produced an ideal environment for the breeding and multiplication of the Lice

I think everyone is familiar with Lice?

The common Louse is very prolific

In the space of 12 days a full-grown female will lay about 100 eggs, it takes about 6 days for them to hatch (half of which are females)

In 18 days these young females are at reproductive maturity and each of them may lay 100 eggs, which will hatch in 6 days

Thus, in the course of 6 weeks, the female parent may see 5,000 of its own descendants!

So, we can understand how quickly this Plague spread!

Someone as suggested that the reference to ***“lice”*** may not be Lice at all

But rather, a tick which lives in the hot sands and preys upon the blood of animals

Its natural size is the same as a grain of sand and after ingestion swells to the size of a hazel nut

The root word for ***“lice”*** means *to fasten*

For this reason, it is believed that this insect may have been some form of tick instead of a mosquito or gnat which was constantly moving

Whatever this insect was, it Tormented the Egyptians

**THE “INSECTS IN THE SAND”**

Next, let’s look at …

**II. THE “INABILITIES OF THE SORCERERS” – v. 18**

The Inability of the Egyptian Sorcerers to Reproduce this Plague

If you remember, they were able to Replicate the miracle of Aaron’s Rod being turned into a Serpent

**Exodus 7:10,11 …**

As well as being able to reproduce the first 2 Plagues

**Exodus 7:22; 8:7 …**

But they could not Replicate this Plague

***“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”***

Why not this time?

We need to understand the source of their power

**II Corinthians 11:14 *– “And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light”***

But Satan is Not all-powerful!

**A. Satan is limited in his ability to inflict**

**Job 1:12 – *“And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD”***

God has Satan on a leash

**B. God’s Power is Greater than Satan’s Power**

**Romans 16:20 – “*And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen”***

**Luke 10:19 – *“Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you”***

As believers, we are positionally seated with Christ in Heaven

Showing we have been given the Authority of His Name

**Ephesians 2:6 – *“And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus”***

**C. Satan is limited in his temptations**

**I Corinthians 10:13 *– “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it”***

**D. Satan also knows when he is defeated**

**James 4:7 – *“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you”***

**E. Satan knows his time is limited**

**Revelation 12:12 – “*Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time”***

Beloved, there is security in boundaries,

Especially when you are looking thru the fence or cage at a big dog or tiger

Young people, thank God for the rules and boundaries that are set by your parents

With most parents, you will be secure in knowing what to do and what NOT to do

**THE “INSECTS IN THE SAND”**

**THE “INABILITIES OF THE SORCERERS”**

**III. THE “IDENTIFICATION OF THE SOURCE” – 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”***

**A. An Ungodly Influence**

The Verdict of the Magicians is …

***“This is the finger of God”***

These are the last recorded words of the magicians

Sooner or later they had to acknowledge that the hand of God was at work here (inevitable)

In the end, every person who has rejected Christ will finally bow and acknowledge that Jesus is Lord, but it will be too late!

The magicians were intent on resisting no longer

I believe they abandoned the conflict for several reasons

**1.** They couldn’t cloak their failures any longer and had a sense of shame

**2.** They are astonished

**3.** They feared the pain of more plagues

Pharaoh is quickly becoming hard and rebellious

He did not want to listen to the truth

This is what happens when we get hard and rebellious

He has listened to the magicians, until now

When he didn't like their message, he tuned them out

This is what happens when a person gets rebellious

They won’t listen

Are you like that?

Have you tuned out the preacher, your parents?

The magicians excited the Pharaoh to unbelief and resistance

Now they are cautioning him perhaps to stop his resistance

They helped to get this snow ball rolling and now they can't stop it

Our influence has a ripple effect

(positively or negatively)

Our negative lives effects other people, even though you may repent

The impact on others is already done

Just because you get right with the Lord, does not mean that others will automatically get right with God

Hateful, destructive talk, sensuality, immorality, drunkenness, and rebellion will scar the lives of people

Yours and theirs

**II Timothy 3:8, 9 – *“Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith” “But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was”***

**B. A Godly Influence**

A godly influence will affect the lives of other people as well!

**Ill.** President Woodrow Wilson told this story -

*“I was in a very common place, I was sitting in a barber chair, when I became aware that a personality had …*

*… entered the room. A man had come quietly in upon the same errand as myself... to have his hair cut and sat in the chair next to me. Every word the man uttered showed a personal interest in the man who was serving him. And before I got through with what was being done for me, I was aware that I had attended an evangelistic service. Because Mr. D. L. Moody was in that chair. I purposely lingered in the room after he had left and noted the singular effect that his visit had brought upon the barbershop. They didn't know his name but they knew that something had elevated their thoughts and I felt that I left that place as I should have left the place of worship. My admiration and esteem for Mr. Moody became very deep indeed.”*

**Ill.** Emerson wrote – *“The best effects of fine people are felt after they have left our presence”*

What effect has your presence left on the lives of others?

**CONCLUSION**

Pharaoh submitted once and broke his promise

Stronger means would be needed to get him to submit next time

The magicians knew this plague was the Finger of God

Why now?

-- The Finger of God was evident in the bloody river and the frogs (They just wouldn’t admit it)

They couldn’t make these problems go away

They could only make it worse

-- His Finger was pointing all the time to obedience

-- In their failure and humility, they saw God working

This is the way the Lord humbles us as well

He is trying to get us to look to Him

He allows us to be shackled with our sin to make us see

He is the only One who can break the chains

-- Pharaoh refused in his hardness because he didn't want to see God's work or have a part in it

This is not what he was looking for or desired

What do you see?

Can you see the Lord working in your life?

Or maybe you aren’t even looking at all?

Let the Finger of God point the way and give you guidance

**THE “INSECTS IN THE SAND”**

**THE “INABILITIES OF THE SORCERERS”**

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