

Pastor Jim Jackson, 2/21/16

Exodus: Finding Freedom, pt. 7—Blood, Frogs, Gnats

Exodus 7:1-8:19

Moses begins to show God's STRENGTH

After Moses complained that God's plan didn't work, God declared He would show Egypt the power of the true God. Though Aarons' staff became a snake that ate the magicians' snakes, the Pharaoh is unimpressed. The next morning, Moses met the Pharaoh at the river where he may have been performing a ritual to Hapi, the god of the Nile. Hapi was worshipped as the nourisher of Egypt through the annual rising of the river and its life-giving elements such as fish and birds. Aaron then took the staff and turned the Nile, ponds, and *even jars of water in homes* to blood, killing every living thing in the Nile and the people had to dig to find drinking water. After the magicians mimicked the blood, Pharaoh was unmoved. The next week, Moses caused an invasion of frogs into Egypt's homes, beds, dishes and bodies. Frogs were considered sacred in Egypt as an emanation of the goddess Heket—who was linked to birth and fertility. The magicians also produced frogs but couldn't rid the land of them, so Moses was asked to stop them. God then killed the frogs and they stunk up the whole land. Pharaoh agrees to let the people go, but when the frogs stop, he goes back on his promise. *Pharaoh wanted relief not repentance.*

The Pharaoh begins to show his STUBBORNNESS

In response to the Pharaoh, Moses brings biting gnats/fleas from the dust as a challenge to Geb, god of the earth, and they cover the ground, animals, and people. Though the magicians were able to emulate some of the miracles, they couldn't reverse the effects, and when they couldn't duplicate the gnats, *they recognize God's hand.* Despite this, the Pharaoh doesn't listen and hardens his *own* heart (8:15). *Rebellious hearts will look for any reason not to believe!* Testing exposes the quality of the heart and either hardens or purifies it. *Though all lives feel pain, a godly heart is purified in the fire and becomes like gold after testing* (Job 23:10). God told Moses *beforehand* that the Pharaoh was stubborn and wouldn't let the people go (Ex. 3:19). So, God chose to also harden his heart to expose it for what it already was and extend Egypt's punishment to clarify the power of Israel's God. This was done to rebuke Egypt and warn other nations that Israel's God was the true God (Josh. 2:10). *The true heart of people should glorify the true God!*