

## Exodus 6:28-10:29    **Disasters and Deliverance**    Fintry, 8/6/2008, pm

- *Summary: God's grace and mercy, working over time to get people's attention, but trying to hold back the worst that people do deserve for as long as possible.*

### Getting Going

- Recap on some of the stuff we've said before:
  - **partnership**: Moses and Aaron working through their team plan, getting to know each other (7:1-2, 8-9)
  - **listening to God** for instruction and direction, learning again to take those steps of faith, to obey and to trust in his promises (7:1-5)
- Themes of:
  - God acting to demonstrate his reality and power
  - Satan imitating God's power
  - Pharaoh's heart being hardened
  - destruction steadily increasing
  - the concern for the state of Pharaoh's heart - whether it was hard or not...

### The Plagues

#### **1. Blood (7:14-24)**

- Riverbank scene, Pharaoh bathing:
  - remember significance of Nile in Egyptian world - religious, social, financial...
  - the Nile was the "lifeblood" of Egypt - and God has turned the lifeblood to real blood, cutting off Egypt's life!
  - imitation by the court magicians - whether fake as per Prince of Egypt (and me in school assemblies, water into wine!), or satanic counterfeit doesn't really matter

#### **2. Frogs (8:1-15)**

- Cycle repeats: Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh, ask that God's people be let go lest a plague (frogs this time) be let to run riot, magicians repeat the miracle...
  - this time there is a difference, however
  - here, for the first time, Pharaoh seeks a compromise (8:8)
  - and see how Moses saves Pharaoh's honour (8:9) even when victory seems to be his!
  - but Pharaoh changes his tune when the frogs are gone (8:15)

#### **3. Gnats (8:16-19)**

- Satan's imitation fails (8:18)
  - even so Pharaoh's heart is hard (8:19) - not just logic when people defy and refuse to turn to God

#### **4. Flies (8:20-32)**

- First place God deals differently with his people:
  - Goshen, where they lived, would be free of the flies (8:22)
- There is a process of upping the ante, of drawing out the distinction between the Egyptians and God's people, throughout this whole sequence
- Again Pharaoh seeks a compromise:
  - worship, but in Egypt (8:25 and then 8:28)
  - God... but on Pharaoh's terms!
- Again Moses prays, despite telling Pharaoh not to act deceitfully again, but Pharaoh's heart becomes hard again

#### **5. Livestock (9:1-7)**

- Again distinction between God's people and the Egyptians
  - yet again, Pharaoh unyielding - and didn't seek any kind of compromise

**6. Boils (9:8-12)**

- Even the magicians themselves were struck down:
  - power apart from God not only can't match God, but is struck down by God

**7. Hail (9:13-35)**

- ...or I will send the full force of my plagues against you...! (9:14)
  - (so what has happened so far has just been a taster!)
- There was the chance for Pharaoh and the officials to shelter from God's vengeance:
  - bring the animals inside... (9:19-21)
  - Goshen again spared
- Move a step further with Pharaoh - **confesses his sin!** (9:27)
  - but when the threat is over, Pharaoh stubbornly hardens his heart once more - **he sinned again**
  - so his previous action was confession, but fell short of repentance, turning away from sin...

**8. Locusts (10:1-20)**

- Still seeking compromise - men only (10:11)
  - but after locusts have come and gone, the heart is yet again hardened

**9. Darkness (10:21-29)**

- We are nearly there!
  - Pharaoh is at the point of giving in, but he is still trying to compromise, to work out a deal with God
  - **women and children can go - but not animals** (ie the means to escape)
  - Pharaoh still wants to do things his own way rather than submitting to God's way

**Conclusion: Disasters and Deliverance**

- And so the scene is set:
  - God has been at work, wreaking a terrible trail of destruction to try and get Pharaoh's attention, to wake him up to the reality of maker and sustainer of the world
  - and it has failed
  - Pharaoh will not listen
- Judgement is real and terrible
  - sin is serious
- Yet do you notice God's grace and mercy here?
  - there is always a way out, there is always the possibility of avoiding the judgement, there is the incredible patience of God!