

## Exodus 7-8 - “The Plagues Begin”

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### 1. The Purposes of God - 7:1-13

**7:1-3 - *So the Lord said to Moses: “See, I have made you as God to Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother shall be your prophet. <sup>2</sup> You shall speak all that I command you. And Aaron your brother shall tell Pharaoh to send the children of Israel out of his land. <sup>3</sup> And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt.***

Moses would come before Pharaoh representing God; he would stand in the place of God before Pharaoh. What God says will be what Moses says.

- Moses did not have to fear rejection or anything like that because Pharaoh wouldn’t be doing that against Moses, but against God.

And Aaron would be functioning as Moses’ prophet. A prophet spoke on behalf of the Lord – they communicated God’s word to the people. As Moses stood in the place of God, Aaron would be speaking the words of Moses (God) to Pharaoh and the people.

Now why would God harden Pharaoh’s heart? Aren’t we trying to soften Pharaoh’s heart so the Israelites can get out of Egypt? This sounds counterproductive, and it might seem almost harsh.

- We read in some passages that God hardens Pharaoh’s heart, while in other passages we read the Pharaoh hardens his heart.
- There are two Hebrew words used here. When it speaks of Pharaoh hardening his heart, the word used is *kabad* and it implies a self-imposed honour or pride. Pharaoh was putting himself over and above anything God said or did.
- When it speaks of God hardening Pharaoh’s heart the word used is *qashaw* which means to make heavy or difficult.
- The idea here is that God will make this a very heavy thing for Pharaoh. God is going to confirm Pharaoh’s heart and position, which is that Pharaoh sees himself as the Supreme sovereign, but God will multiply His signs and wonders and all Egypt (especially Pharaoh) will know that God is the true ruler of all.
- “In his commentary on this passage, John Currid explains, “ancient Egyptian texts teach that the heart is the essence of the person, the inner spiritual centre of the self. Pharaoh’s heart was particularly important because the

Egyptians believed it was the all-controlling factor in both history and society. It was further held that the hearts of the gods Ra and Horus were sovereign over everything. Because Pharaoh was the incarnation of those two gods, his heart was thought to be sovereign over creation.”<sup>6</sup> Therefore, by hardening Pharaoh’s heart, God was making a theological point. He was proving that he alone is sovereign over all things. Nothing is outside the purpose of his will, not even the heart of a king.” <sup>1</sup>

There are two ways a person can come to know God. You can come to know Him by experiencing His grace and mercy in salvation (6:6-8). Or you may know Him by experiencing His judgment and wrath (7:4-5). But the outcome is the same for all – everyone will come to know who God is and every knee will indeed bow (Philippians 2:10-11). <sup>2</sup>

- Again, God’s purposes is for His glory to illuminate the world. He will do that through a person’s soft heart of surrender and acceptance of Him, and He will do it through a person’s hard heart and rejection of Him. But there’s only one of those paths that bring life and joy.

This hardening is only confirming what Pharaoh has already determined. This is not God hardening His heart in rejection of Pharaoh, this is God hardening his heart because Pharaoh has rejected God.

- This is why the Bible repeats in Psalm 95:8; Hebrews 3:8, 3:15, 4:7: **Psalm 95:8**, *“Do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion, As in the day of trial in the wilderness,”*  
**Hebrews 3:15**, *“Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”*

**7:4-5 - But Pharaoh will not heed you, so that I may lay My hand on Egypt and bring My armies and My people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. <sup>5</sup> And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch out My hand on Egypt and bring out the children of Israel from among them.”**

<sup>6</sup> John D. Currid, *A Study Commentary on Exodus*, 2 vols. (Auburn, MA: Evangelical Press USA, 2000), 1:113, 114. See also G. K. Beale, “An Exegetical and Theological Consideration of the Hardening of Pharaoh’s Heart in Exodus 4–14 and Romans 9,” *Trinity Journal*, 5 (1984), pp. 129–154.

<sup>1</sup> Ryken, P. G., & Hughes, R. K. (2005). *Exodus: saved for God’s glory* (p. 201). Crossway Books.

<sup>2</sup> Merida, T. (2014). *Exalting Jesus in Exodus* (Ex 6:6–7:5). Holman Reference.

Pharaoh will harden his heart and it will give opportunity for God to reveal who He is. Remember that Pharaoh replied to Moses' humble request in 5:2 by saying, *"Who is the Lord...?"* The purpose in Pharaoh not heeding Moses' request and hardening his heart is so that God can demonstrate and show clearly who He is! They may not know who the Lord is at the moment, but they sure will when He gets done with them.

- Pharaoh's stubborn rejection will only give God an opportunity to display His power and might.

We today can go through times of trial that we surely do not enjoy, but God is doing a work through it that we don't always realize. Here is Israel living in Egypt, a type of the world, yet there is going to be something about them that is going to stand out. God will be taking them through this time of plagues and pain so that His glory may be revealed. Ever wonder why we have to go through pain and problems? Have you realized that through those times, God is performing His will, that He may be seen in the way He delivers us through them?

- God's hand is in it all, and we can be instruments that either squeak and squawk through those difficult days, or instruments that sound out an incredible tune of praise that truly brings God much glory!

**7:6-10 - *Then Moses and Aaron did so; just as the Lord commanded them, so they did. <sup>7</sup> And Moses was eighty years old and Aaron eighty-three years old when they spoke to Pharaoh. <sup>8</sup> Then the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, <sup>9</sup> "When Pharaoh speaks to you, saying, 'Show a miracle for yourselves,' then you shall say to Aaron, 'Take your rod and cast it before Pharaoh, and let it become a serpent.' " <sup>10</sup> So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and they did so, just as the Lord commanded. And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a serpent.***

An 80 yr. old and an 83 yr. old – I love it! You're never too old to be used of God.

Do you notice anything different now with the Lord's command to go before Pharaoh? There's no arguing or excuses. It says, they ***did so; just as the Lord commanded...***

- Here's an important victory even before they get to Pharaoh. What the Lord asks of us is obedience. And Moses is showing growth and trust in the Lord as he now goes with an immediate loving obedience to God's Word.
- It's this kind of response that keeps us walking in blessing and peace.

**Show a miracle for yourselves...** This would have been a very normal and appropriate request of Pharaoh to ask for a sign/miracle. He wants to see if these guys have any kind of authority behind them. Jesus and the apostles all came with great signs which validated the word of truth that they were sharing.

- However, we don't need to keep having signs and miracles because we've already seen it all – we've seen Jesus rise from the dead. He's alive today! The word is complete and proven. Nothing needs to be authenticated or validated today when we have all we need already.

**and it became a serpent...** This is interesting what God is doing here, and will do with all these plagues. Because this isn't just a battle against Pharaoh and Egypt, this is a demonstration of God's power over all the false gods and so called deities of Egypt. Ultimately, it's God waging war against Satan (interestingly Satan is often depicted as a serpent in Scripture).

The Egyptians were fascinated with snakes. They feared them greatly and sadly this led to their worship of them. The word for serpent here is the Hebrew word *tanniyn* which speaks of a poisonous serpent, and even some have translated it to be a sea monster (ie. crocodile).

Nevertheless, it appears that a serpent, most likely a cobra, is in mind.

- This is what the Pharaoh had on their ceremonial headdress – a fierce female cobra. This depicted the harshness and severity that Egypt would strike at their enemies. It instilled fear into their enemies as much as they themselves had a fear of these serpents.
- “This is how a relief at Karnak describes one of Shoshenk's victories in battle: “Thy war-mace, it struck down thy foes ... thy serpent-crest was mighty among them.”<sup>4 3</sup>

What's sad is that though the Egyptians feared snakes, it was this fear that led them to worship them. There was even a temple built to the snake-goddess Wadjet (represented by the cobra).

- This is often the way Satan works too. He leads through fear to bring a person into submission or control. In the end there's no profit or joy in it.

<sup>4</sup> James Henry Breasted, ed., *Ancient Records of Egypt*, 5 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1906–1907), 4:357, quoted in Currid, *Ancient Egypt and the Old Testament*, p. 90.

<sup>3</sup> Ryken, P. G., & Hughes, R. K. (2005). *Exodus: saved for God's glory* (p. 206). Crossway Books.

**7:11-13 - *But Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers; so the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. <sup>12</sup> For every man threw down his rod, and they became serpents. But Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. <sup>13</sup> And Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, as the Lord had said.***

Pharaoh called in all his people – wise men, sorcerers – these were the magicians of Egypt. We don't know how many this represented, but you can imagine that Moses and Aaron were feeling a little outnumbered. But again, when you have God on your side, you're never outnumbered!!

As these magicians carried out their enchantments, their rods were thrown down and they became serpents. How did they do this??

- It's not certain whether this was just an allusion or some parlor trick. Snakes had a nerve near the back of their head that when pressed would put them into a paralysis. It could be that these magicians came in with snakes that looked like rods, and when they threw them down it just revealed what they already were. But it's not so easy to explain away these things in the natural when it comes to these magicians duplicating some of the other miracles.
- The reasonable conclusion is that they are doing these things through the power of Satan. Yes, Satan has power and he's not someone to play around with. Jesus called him the ruler of this world (John 12:31).
- Another world leader will come on the scene in a future day and he will operate in the power of Satan: **2 Thessalonians 2:9–12**, *"The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, <sup>10</sup> and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. <sup>11</sup> And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, <sup>12</sup> that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness."*

Satan is one that looks to imitate the miracles of God for the purpose of deceiving people. Satan does this throughout the tribulation. He is only able to copy the things of God (ie. giving a mark on the forehead or right hand, just as God did with His people). Satan is always a counterfeiter, never an innovator.

- It is why we need to be people who don't follow after signs and wonders. Because they can be deceptive. We need to be people who are grounded in the Word of God. Miracles have been instrumental in bringing people to belief in God, but our faith needs to be founded and based in the Word.



We have some insight into these magicians in **2 Timothy 3:8–9**, *"Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; <sup>9</sup> but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was."*

- Though they saw the work of the Lord, they resisted the truth. They were living in folly, and God exposes that in the next verse as we see their rods being eaten up by Aaron's rod.

No matter what Satan tries to do – God is still greater! *"He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."* (**1 John 4:4**)

- In fact it provides a great picture of what God has in store for all of Egypt's army. Because as Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs, so too the army of Egypt will be swallowed up in the Red Sea (Exodus 15:12).

And yet seeing them obviously being outmatched, Pharaoh still stubbornly refuses to yield to God. He hardens his heart.

But again, this will only provide more opportunity for God to demonstrate greater power and majesty in what He will do. Beginning with the first plague...

## 2. First Plague: Water Becomes Blood – 7:14-25

**7:14-18 - So the Lord said to Moses: "Pharaoh's heart is hard; he refuses to let the people go. <sup>15</sup> Go to Pharaoh in the morning, when he goes out to the water, and you shall stand by the river's bank to meet him; and the rod which was turned to a serpent you shall take in your hand. <sup>16</sup> And you shall say to him, 'The Lord God of the Hebrews has sent me to you, saying, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me in the wilderness"; but indeed, until now you would not hear! <sup>17</sup> Thus says the Lord: "By this you shall know that I am the Lord. Behold, I will strike the waters which are in the river with the rod that is in my hand, and they shall be turned to blood. <sup>18</sup> And the fish that are in the river shall die, the river shall stink, and the Egyptians will loathe to drink the water of the river." ' ' "**

Again, the plagues are all a direct attack upon the various deities that were worshiped in Egypt. Three deities were associated with the Nile: Osiris, Nu, and Hapi.

“The Egyptians depicted the Nile as Hapi, a fat man with the breasts of a woman which indicated the powers of fertility and nourishment. There was a hymn they sang in the temple to this god which went something like this:

Thou waterest the fields which Ra created ...

Thou art the bringer of food ... creator of all good things.

Thou fillest the storehouses ...

Thou hast care for the poor and needy” <sup>4</sup>

It’s possible that Pharaoh was going to the Nile in the morning to worship this god there.

“In order to understand these plagues we need to understand that they were directed against the gods and goddesses of Egypt and were intended to show the superiority of the God of Israel to the Egyptian gods. There were about eighty major deities in Egypt, all clustered about the three great natural forces of Egyptian life: the Nile river, the land, and the sky. It does not surprise us, therefore, that the plagues God sent against Egypt in this historic battle follow this three-force pattern. The first two plagues were against the gods of the Nile. The next four were against the land gods. The final four plagues were against the gods of the sky, culminating in the death of the firstborn.” <sup>1 5</sup>

The Nile was definitely the life blood of Egypt. This was a major natural resource for them. It was used for transportation, irrigation, drinking, food, etc. It would be similar to cutting off our oil supply, the stock market crashing, drinking water being contaminated, and bare shelves in grocery stores. It would be chaos! So God is going to hit them in a way to really get their attention.

**7:19-21 - *Then the Lord spoke to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Take your rod and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their streams, over their rivers, over their ponds, and over all their pools of water, that they may become blood. And there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in buckets of wood and pitchers of stone.’ ”* <sup>20</sup> And Moses and Aaron did so, just as the Lord commanded. So he lifted up the rod and struck the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh and in the**

<sup>4</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed., Vol. 1, p. 225). Thomas Nelson.

<sup>1</sup> James Montgomery Boice, *Psalms: An Expository Commentary; Volume 2: Psalms 42–106* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1996), pp. 849, 850.

<sup>5</sup> Ryken, P. G., & Hughes, R. K. (2005). *Exodus: saved for God’s glory* (p. 216). Crossway Books.

***sight of his servants. And all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood. <sup>21</sup> The fish that were in the river died, the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink the water of the river. So there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.***

This river that the people were so dependent on was suddenly in a moment rendered useless. Everything in it died. They couldn't drink the water. And soon everything began to smell fishy. Not a pleasant place to be.

- This is where an obstinate heart towards God gets you. People think that living life their way is going to bring the happiness and peace they are looking for. But sin only leads to futility and an unbearable funk.

***7:22-25 - Then the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments; and Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, as the Lord had said. <sup>23</sup> And Pharaoh turned and went into his house. Neither was his heart moved by this. <sup>24</sup> So all the Egyptians dug all around the river for water to drink, because they could not drink the water of the river. <sup>25</sup> And seven days passed after the Lord had struck the river.***

Now these magicians had a real chance to shine here, but what do they do? They only make things worse!! Again, they're only able to mimic what God has done, there's no innovation or upgrade. They just add to the problem! They did that with the snakes and they'll do it with the frogs. And you just wonder, what are you thinking!? But this is the work of Satan. He isn't out to help, he's out to destroy.

- It is not a part of Satan's program to do a work of good, only a work of destruction. It's simply not in him. Yet people blindly follow after the counterfeit and believe the lie. Pharaoh falls into this category.

Now you have to wonder, if all the water was turned to blood, where did they get clean water to turn to blood for themselves? It seems that's why vs. 24 is given. They were able to dig down to the water source and gather water there. This water was then turned to blood by these magicians.

And yet with this first sign of God, Pharaoh isn't moved. He's still in de-Nile! This is a stubborn and prideful man that will not give God the honor due Him.

### 3. Second Plague: Frogs – 8:1-15



**8:1-7 - And the Lord spoke to Moses, “Go to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord: “Let My people go, that they may serve Me. <sup>2</sup> But if you refuse to let them go, behold, I will smite all your territory with frogs. <sup>3</sup> So the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into your house, into your bedroom, on your bed, into the houses of your servants, on your people, into your ovens, and into your kneading bowls. <sup>4</sup> And the frogs shall come up on you, on your people, and on all your servants.” ’ ” <sup>5</sup> Then the Lord spoke to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Stretch out your hand with your rod over the streams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and cause frogs to come up on the land of Egypt.’ ” <sup>6</sup> So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. <sup>7</sup> And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs on the land of Egypt.**

This second plague is an attack on the goddess Heqt. She was depicted with the head of a frog, and was said to aid women in childbirth. Frogs were sacred in Egypt and if you killed one, it was punishable by death.

Now if you saw frogs coming up and getting into everything – your oven, fridge, cooking utensils – you’d be ready to croak, wouldn’t you! You’d certainly want to be smashing some frogs. But you can’t, they’re sacred. So these frogs are invading every piece of real estate, and the Egyptians can do nothing to clear them out.

They’re riding their chariots through frog covered roads. I’m sure on more than one occasion they got stuck and had to get *toad* 🐸.

- It’s as though God is saying, *You want to worship frogs? I’ll give you enough frogs to worship for 10 lifetimes.*

And once again, these magicians could really set themselves apart by getting rid of these frogs. But they only make things worse! They add to the problem.

- All of Satan’s solutions only add to your problems. If he says, *this will make you happy*, you can bet it’s not, it’s going to make your situation worse.

**8:8-15 - Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, “Entreat the Lord that He may take away the frogs from me and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may sacrifice to the Lord.” <sup>9</sup> And Moses said to Pharaoh, “Accept the honor of saying when I shall intercede for you, for your servants, and for your people, to destroy the frogs from you and your houses, that they may remain in the river only.” <sup>10</sup> So he said, “Tomorrow.” And he said, “Let it be according to your word, that you may know that**

***there is no one like the Lord our God. <sup>11</sup> And the frogs shall depart from you, from your houses, from your servants, and from your people. They shall remain in the river only.” <sup>12</sup> Then Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh. And Moses cried out to the Lord concerning the frogs which He had brought against Pharaoh. <sup>13</sup> So the Lord did according to the word of Moses. And the frogs died out of the houses, out of the courtyards, and out of the fields. <sup>14</sup> They gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank. <sup>15</sup> But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and did not heed them, as the Lord had said.***

It's interesting that in vs. 9 Moses asks Pharaoh when he would like to be prayed for. You would think Pharaoh would say, *How about right now!!* But he doesn't. He says, *How about tomorrow?*

- Such is the grip that sin can often have in a life. Though it stinks and is a pain, it can begin to have a hold on you to where it's hard to let it go.

After interceding for Pharaoh and the Egyptians, the frogs died. They piled them all together and the land stank. Could you imagine the smell of thousands of rotting carcasses of frogs?

- I remember in one place we lived a rat had gotten in the wall. It was fed some poison and ended up dying in the wall. And man did it stink! One little carcass brought months of agony. Could you imagine what these Egyptians were going through?
- Sin is like this. The repercussions of it can be far reaching. Yes, we're forgiven and cleansed, but the aftermath of sin can leave a stench for a long period after.
- Don't be condemned by it, but use it as a warning in your life and learn from it.

***But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart***

... How sad. Pharaoh wanted to be free from the consequences of sin, but not free from the sin itself. As soon as the problem was gone, he continued on in his ways.

Many people have come to God in desperation hoping that He fix their problems. But we need to see why the problems are there and ask God to deal with that. Typically sin is at the root of the problem. God isn't interested in a temporary commitment to Him, He wants us to come with a saving faith and a heart ready to surrender to Him fully.

#### 4. Third Plague: Lice – 8:16-19

**8:16-19 - *So the Lord said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Stretch out your rod, and strike the dust of the land, so that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.’ ”*** <sup>17</sup> ***And they did so. For Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod and struck the dust of the earth, and it became lice on man and beast. All the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt.*** <sup>18</sup> ***Now the magicians so worked with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not. So there were lice on man and beast.*** <sup>19</sup> ***Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, “This is the finger of God.” But Pharaoh’s heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, just as the Lord had said.***

This plague came with no warning to Pharaoh. This was an attack to their god Geb, the earth-god.

This would have been completely humiliating for the Egyptians as they would have been covered in lice. Particularly unnerving to the religious leaders and the pagan priests of Egypt who were required to keep themselves ceremonially pure for their practice. Before performing their religious services they would bathe regularly and shave their head. This outbreak of lice would have cut them off from performing their duties. Not to mention the livestock that were also affected meaning that sacrifices were unable to happen.

- These lice rendered all worshippers impure and unable to worship their false gods.

This time when the magicians tried to counterfeit this work, they were unable to. And they declared, ***This is the finger of God.***

- These magicians don’t yet know fully who Yahweh is, but they’re realizing he’s more powerful than their gods.
- It’s almost like they’re conceding, there’s more strength in the finger of God than in all the body of our made up gods combined.
- We see other expressions like this in Scripture that speak of the hand of God, or the outstretched arm of God. It speaks of the power and might of God.
- Satan is limited in his power. And he’s unable to do anything apart from God giving him permission to do it.

Even with the magicians tapping out and revealing this is beyond anything we’ve seen – this is the finger of God, Pharaoh still will not surrender. Stubbornly he continued to harden his heart.

- Pharaoh has seen enough to know that Yahweh is indeed the Lord of lords, yet his heart grew hard. People will often say, if I can just see God perform a miracle, I'll believe. But this isn't always so. It takes yielding your will to His, and placing your faith in Him.

## 5. Fourth Plague: Flies – 8:20-32

**8:20-24 - *And the Lord said to Moses, “Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh as he comes out to the water. Then say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord: “Let My people go, that they may serve Me. <sup>21</sup> Or else, if you will not let My people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies on you and your servants, on your people and into your houses. The houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground on which they stand. <sup>22</sup> And in that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, in which My people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there, in order that you may know that I am the Lord in the midst of the land. <sup>23</sup> I will make a difference between My people and your people. Tomorrow this sign shall be.” ’ ” <sup>24</sup> And the Lord did so. Thick swarms of flies came into the house of Pharaoh, into his servants’ houses, and into all the land of Egypt. The land was corrupted because of the swarms of flies.***

God sends a swarm of flies for this fourth plague. We're not sure exactly what insect this was, but I'm sure it doesn't matter, as anything flying around and swarming you is not pleasant.

- Interestingly the word for swarm also speaks of mixture. Some have said this was a mixture of different insects. It could have encompassed beetles, spiders, the dog-fly, mosquitoes, ticks, or the scarab (which were sacred to Ra, the sun god. Gold scarabs have been found in some tombs. They were a symbol of eternal life).

Some say this plague was directed at their god of resurrection – Kepher – who was depicted as a beetle.

It's here with this 4<sup>th</sup> plague that God begins to make a difference between the Hebrews living in Goshen, and the rest of the Egyptians in the land. The flies would miraculously stop at the border of Goshen and not bother the Israelite people there. We'll see the same protection of God's people in the Tribulation.

- Sometimes we'll go through troubles as the Israelites did here. It's the result of sin. The curse has plagued us.

- Yet when we are set apart for God, there will be additional protection and peace, as evidenced here.

**8:25-28 - Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, “Go, sacrifice to your God in the land.”<sup>26</sup> And Moses said, “It is not right to do so, for we would be sacrificing the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord our God. If we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, then will they not stone us?”<sup>27</sup> We will go three days’ journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to the Lord our God as He will command us.”<sup>28</sup> So Pharaoh said, “I will let you go, that you may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness; only you shall not go very far away. Intercede for me.”**

Pharaoh gives the green light to go, yet the command was a compromising one. *You may go, but stay in the land.*

- Satan would say the same to people today. *You can go and worship your God, but you don’t need to leave the things of this world. You can still have your cake and eat it too. You don’t have to be separate from this world.*
- And yet for the Christian there should be a distinction made. We are in the world, but we’re not to be of the world. Our calling is to walk in obedience to God fully. God had called the Israelites to go three days journey into the wilderness. Anything short of that would be disobedience.
- And yet, it’s amazing how easily people can compromise in their walk with God and allow themselves to be engaged in the things of this world that God says we are to come out and be separate from.

**8:29-32 - Then Moses said, “Indeed I am going out from you, and I will entreat the Lord, that the swarms of flies may depart tomorrow from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people. But let Pharaoh not deal deceitfully anymore in not letting the people go to sacrifice to the Lord.”<sup>30</sup> So Moses went out from Pharaoh and entreated the Lord.<sup>31</sup> And the Lord did according to the word of Moses; He removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people. Not one remained.<sup>32</sup> But Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also; neither would he let the people go.**

Now if I’m God, I’m probably really losing patience with Pharaoh at this time. This would be the last straw for me. He’s not a man of his word, he keeps breaking his end of the deal, yet God is gracious and merciful.

But God cannot be mocked. He will make a distinction between those who are His and those who aren’t. Pharaoh is setting himself up for a world of hurt.