

Second Plague – Frogs

By Mark E. Benjamin

Paper Routes and Ponds

Some time ago, my oldest son wanted to get a paper route. That, of course, meant that I was up with him to help with the deliveries. On one particular warm Spring morning, while walking in the pitch black, I had a startling encounter. I took a step and felt a firm, but squashing, under the force of my boot. In a surprisingly quick nimble move, I shifted my weight to the opposite foot. Looking down I witnessed a fairly sizeable frog hopping from under my foot to find shelter in the nearby bush.

That instance led me to think about what it must have been like during the second plague of Egypt – the plague of frogs. Imagine, if you will, attempting to live in the following environment; **Exodus 8:3(NIV) 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.** No matter where you went or what you did, frogs were there. You couldn't take a step without having one under your foot. And there weren't just a few, there were countless numbers of them. Compare the above verse with the one from the aftermath; **Exodus 8:14 They were piled into heaps, and the land reeked of them.** There were so many frogs that the Egyptians had to pile them into heaps.

Although, my almost frog fatal incident was in no way close to a stroll across Egypt during the first half of **Exodus 8.** It did give me a very real and personal experience to compare with the second plague upon Egypt. Still to this day I can feel the sensation of the poor unsuspecting amphibian compressing beneath me. This brings up an obvious question about Pharaoh; why did he make the statement in **Exodus 8:10?** Moses gave Pharaoh the choice in **Exodus 8:9** of when he wanted the plague of frogs to be removed. Pharaoh answered, **“Take them away, tomorrow”** Even though just about any and every living thing was a representation of a god to the Egyptians, I think it wouldn't take very long to become quite annoyed with the bulgy eyed, web-footers.

My family and I enjoy camping and try to have at least one trip a year living in a tent for a week. One such trip I invited my nephew to tag along. While I was checking in, he and my oldest son – the same one that had the paper route – went to investigate the small pond near by. They found a frog and my son was able to catch him. After a short examination of the creature, my nephew suggested that they “toss” him back into the pond. My son misunderstood and reared back, throwing like he was the center fielder trying to stop the winning run from advancing to home. The frog's legs were flailing wildly as it soars through the air before splashing into the center of the pond. Although I instructed my boy on the proper way of placing a frog back into its habitat and making a point of my disappointment in his mistreatment of one of God's creations, I can't help but to think that I would do the very same act towards a flood of frogs if I was an Egyptian.

Why Get Ride Of Today What You Can Keep Until Tomorrow

But why tomorrow? Why not take them away now? What possible reason would Pharaoh have in prolonging the second plague of Egypt? Of course we cannot know for sure the mind of a Pharaoh so many years ago. Unless it is found within his personal diary, his thoughts at the time, the best we can do is make conjectures and hypotheses. Even with that being true, the following are most likely part of the reasoning for requesting a night with the frogs.

Pharaoh could have just been buying time. Time to allow his magicians and gods to work out the problem themselves. The land of Egypt had many gods at that time in their history. With all that deity, surely one of them could have been able to rectify the situation. After all what good is a group of gods if they can't handle a gathering of measly frogs. I'm sure Pharaoh thought his magicians and the gods of Egypt had the circumstance in hand. By morning, the problem would be gone.

Asking Moses to take care of the issue immediately would have conceded to the God of Israel. That simple admission would have begun a spiraling downfall of events. The Egyptians would have known that their own gods were no match for the one true God, “I AM”. Israel would have the upper hand, and surely a revolt would not have been far off, causing the loss of not only the slaves of Egypt but also a prime source of its wealth.

By giving the green light to Moses and the God he represented, Pharaoh would have admitted that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob actually existed. If He exists, then He must be acknowledged. Moreover, if acknowledged, then followed. Obedience was something that Pharaoh and the Egyptians did not do in regard to The LORD. Waiting a day may not have been the smartest move to make, but it was the most reasonable play.

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A Heart Of Stone

There is the simple and obvious reason for the delay in relieving the land of the plague. The answer is found before the plagues began. In **Exodus 7:3 (NIV) But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and though I multiply my miraculous signs and wonders in Egypt, (4) he will not listen to you...** Simply enough, God made Pharaoh act in the manner that he did. For Pharaoh to have a calamity fall upon the land and then to immediately have it removed, would not show a very hardened heart, but one of repentance and submission.

Ok, so why did Pharaoh need a hardened heart? Wouldn't it have been much easier if God softened his heart? That might have allowed for a less destructive encounter for Egypt. But then how would both Egypt and Israel have known the power of the hand of God? Without the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, they would not have **"known that He is the LORD"** (See VoydPhil-ing #8 It Come To Pass).

A Bouquet Of Frogs

An overlooked reason for spending a night with the frogs, I believe, we can find in which god of Egypt frogs represented. Also a good clue is in **Exodus 1:7 (KJV) And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them. (8) Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph. (9) And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we...**

Israel became very prolific, much more than the Egyptians did. The population imbalance was becoming a real problem. If Egypt were to keep the children of Israel as its slaves, they would need to be kept at manageable levels. Unfortunately, for the Egyptians, they were on the wrong side of the spiritual battle. **Exodus (NAS) 1:12 But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread out, so that they were in dread of the sons of Israel.** No matter what Pharaoh tried to do to solve the overpopulation issue of the Hebrews, he not only failed, but also caused the exact opposite effect.

Pharaoh turned to his own gods for help. I believe he saw an opportunity with the second plague. Specifically in the goddess Heqt. She had the head of a frog and when the land was overflowing with her living persona, it would be interpreted that Heqt was moving in force. But, what made Pharaoh think the over presence of Heqt a possible counter offensive to the Hebrew problem? The goddess Heqt was the goddess of resurrection and more importantly, the goddess of fertility.

Since trying to subdue the Hebrew's reproductive ability had no effect; the Pharaoh switched to trying to increase the numbers of Egyptians. A night with the goddess Heqt in their **"bedroom and onto your bed"** should help to even the numbers about nine months later. This attempt at forcing a population explosion shows that Pharaoh, although highly depended on the powers of false gods, he was also extremely cunning in his ways.

Just as cunning might be a term to describe the Pharaoh of Exodus, passionate would definitely not be a word synonymous with Pharaoh. I would venture to guess that a hot bathtub filled with fresh rose petals, followed by a bed covered with the same velvet, sweet flowers might have a romantic value to it. However, I'm not too sure about having your kneading troughs and then your bedroom filled with frogs, sparking a loving interlude. Even if the frogs did represent a goddess of fertility.

A Hopy Ending

So what lesson can we learn? How can we apply this to our lives today? Well, the answer is as numerous as the frogs of Egypt. A major point that I think we can derive from this is that no matter what might be fighting against you or what troublesome times come your way; the powers of the LORD are far greater than the powers of the Evil One. Although our enemy will conspire against us, the God of Israel knows his every move and has no trouble with overcoming what hardships might come our way.

We can also see that if we are overwhelmed, we need not spend even one more night with a dilemma. We can ask the Lord to remove our issues right now. Leave it in His powerful hands, instead of thinking we have a solution that has us spending one more night with frogs. Relinquish your incapable grasp on a situation and let God handle it. Don't tell Him to **"take them away tomorrow"**.