Exodus 8-9

- Tonight, we'll study the first nine judgments that the Lord visits upon Egypt
  - That will be followed next time with an in-depth study of the tenth judgment
  - In studying the first nine judgments, we'll use a simple pattern
    - We'll review the form of each judgment
    - We'll note any unique details of each judgment
    - We'll consider the way in which each judgment undermined the Egyptians' faith in their false gods
    - And on occasion we'll highlight significant issues or prophetic aspects of the events
  - And remember the orderliness we discussed last week
    - The plagues run in groups of three
    - The first two of each group come with warnings

**Ex. 7:13** Yet Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he did not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

**Ex. 7:14** Then the LORD said to Moses, “Pharaoh’s heart is stubborn; he refuses to let the people go.

**Ex. 7:15** “Go to Pharaoh in the morning as he is going out to the water, and station yourself to meet him on the bank of the Nile; and you shall take in your hand the staff that was turned into a serpent.

**Ex. 7:16** “You shall say to him, ‘The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you, saying, “Let My people go, that they may serve Me in the wilderness. But behold, you have not listened until now.”

**Ex. 7:17** ‘Thus says the LORD, “By this you shall know that I am the LORD: behold, I will strike the water that is in the Nile with the staff that is in my hand, and it will be turned to blood.

**Ex. 7:18** “The fish that are in the Nile will die, and the Nile will become foul, and the Egyptians will find difficulty in drinking water from the Nile.”’

**Ex. 7:19** Then the LORD said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, over their streams, and over their pools, and over all their reservoirs of water, that they may become blood; and there will be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.”’
Ex. 7:20 So Moses and Aaron did even as the LORD had commanded. And he lifted up the staff and struck the water that was in the Nile, in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants, and all the water that was in the Nile was turned to blood.

Ex. 7:21 The fish that were in the Nile died, and the Nile became foul, so that the Egyptians could not drink water from the Nile. And the blood was through all the land of Egypt.

Ex. 7:22 But the magicians of Egypt did the same with their secret arts; and Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he did not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

Ex. 7:23 Then Pharaoh turned and went into his house with no concern even for this.

Ex. 7:24 So all the Egyptians dug around the Nile for water to drink, for they could not drink of the water of the Nile.

Ex. 7:25 Seven days passed after the LORD had struck the Nile.

- The first judgment is the plague of blood

  o Since this is the first plague in the series of three, the warning comes in the morning
    - God tells Moses to go before Pharaoh while he is at the water in the morning
    - Meeting him at the bank, announce that his stubbornness will now result in God’s judgment
  
  o Specifically, Aaron will announce that the God of the Hebrews has declared that they be let go, but since Pharaoh refused, all water will become blood
    - All water in Egypt will be turned into blood
      - All rivers, all storage containers
    - And vessels of wood and stone
      - These terms refer to bowls used in pagan religious ceremonies
      - So that Egypt’s religious practices are impacted as well
  
  o And blood instantly makes life in the water die off
    - The fish die, and men cannot drink it
    - Plus, blood will begin to spoil almost immediately, causing the waters to be foul and smell badly
• In v.24, we read that the Egyptians were finally able to find some water to drink by digging for it
  o The water under the land had not be polluted
    • Only the surface water had been polluted
    • But then the magicians get into the act
  o The magicians are called by Pharaoh to offer a response to Moses’ act
    • Like they did with the snake, the magicians are able to accomplish the same outcome
      • The water they turn to blood was likely the new water sources that the Egyptians uncovered in their rush to find new water
    • Pharaoh might have expected the magicians to act against Moses’ work, so as to return the blood to water
      • But the best they could do was add more blood to the problem
      • I’m sure they appreciated the magician’s helpful work!
  o The magicians were working their secret arts, which means working with power Satan gave them as they worshipped the enemy
    • Satan has power to counterfeit God’s work, even to the point of making water turn to blood
      • But Satan’s power is limited in that he cannot undo the work of God
      • And he cannot do more than God created him to do
        o Just as we cannot do more than God created us to do
    • Therefore, Satan acts by watching God and mimicking in a false way what he sees God doing
      • Remember, Satan wants to be God, so it only makes sense that his method of operating is to imitate God
    • In the end times judgments, we’ll see Satan doing similar things
• He will bring a false Christ, a false prophet and false miracles

• Each will be a replica of something God has done earlier, but his imitations are corrupt and nothing but lies

• Blood judgment mirrors one of the judgments in the Tribulation period
  
  o In fact, we can find parallels for the first nine judgments within the events of Tribulation
    
    ▪ Some have a direct connection like the blood judgment
    
    ▪ Others are implied
      
      • We’ll point out these connections with each judgment
      
      • But the main point is that this period of judgment is a foreshadowing of the Tribulation

  o Like we taught in an earlier week, the ten plagues eventually result in Israel set free from bondage, worshipping at the mountain of God and entering into the promised land
    
    ▪ This earlier event set in place the pictures and representations of God at work
    
    ▪ For the effect that the future generation of Israel who will experience the Tribulation will see the pattern and come to understand God’s purposes

• Moses says this plague lasts seven days
  
  o Men can live up to seven days without fresh water
    
    ▪ But perhaps some Egyptians died as a result of this waiting
    
    ▪ By and large, however, the judgment was less about destroying life than it was to serve as a warning and example of what will follow
    
    ▪ The point was to show Egypt and Israel Who was God

  o To that point, let’s note which Egyptian gods were mocked by this judgment
    
    ▪ Nile River
    
    ▪ Khnum - guardian of the Nile source
Hapi - the Spirit of the Nile
Osiris - guardian of the underworld and the Nile was his blood stream
Sepek - Crocodile god
Neith - Lapes fish protector
Hathor - Chromis fish protector

Altogether, this judgment has made Egypt question the power of their gods when the Hebrew God was able to render them useless

This lesson is also supposed to impress upon Israel the strength of their God

Don’t underestimate the impact of these judgments on Israel as well

- This judgment impacted them as well, especially since the magicians counterfeited the miracle
- But until this moment, the Jews had never seen their God at work
- Entire generations had come and gone without knowing the power of God

In fact, only the patriarchs had seen God at work, and on occasion their enemies did as well

- Furthermore, there is no written scripture
- No graven images, no statuettes
- The Jews have only their very existence to validate the truth of God
  - They are a people called by God and created from Abraham’s loins
  - And here they are now seeing this God at work for the first time

So these ten judgments are intended for Egypt and the world, but their most lasting impact will be on the conscience of Israel

- Now we see more reason for God hardening Pharaoh’s heart
He desires for Israel to know Him in a way they have never known before

- And this revelation of God will produce a lasting, permanent mark on the psyche of Israel
- Never again will the nation fail to understand the God they worship
- These miracles including those at the mountain and those that occur in the desert will create that lasting impression

If you want to understand how unique this work of God truly is, consider that God has only worked this way during three times in history

- Beside the time of Exodus, God has performed dramatic miracles on a widespread basis only twice more
  - During the ministry of Elijah and Elisha
  - And in the time of Jesus and the Apostles
- Apart from these three times, God has never resorted to a widespread use of miracles to make an impression

All three times, the work was done in preparation for a time of judgment for Israel

- Here it precedes Israel’s time wandering in the desert
- In Elijah and Elisha, it preceded the judgment against the ten tribes in the northern kingdom
- And with Jesus and the Apostles, it preceded the current period of Israel’s hardening, the destruction of the temple and their scattering in AD 70

There is yet one final time of God working through widespread miracles on the earth

- This time will come in conjunction with God’s chastisement of Israel and the world during Tribulation

Now we move to the second judgment
Ex. 8:1 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, 'Let My people go, that they may serve Me.'"

Ex. 8:2 "But if you refuse to let them go, behold, I will smite your whole territory with frogs.

Ex. 8:3 "The Nile will swarm with frogs, which will come up and go into your house and into your bedroom and on your bed, and into the houses of your servants and on your people, and into your ovens and into your kneading bowls.

Ex. 8:4 "So the frogs will come up on you and your people and all your servants.'""

Ex. 8:5 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your hand with your staff over the rivers, over the streams and over the pools, and make frogs come up on the land of Egypt.'"

Ex. 8:6 So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt.

Ex. 8:7 The magicians did the same with their secret arts, making frogs come up on the land of Egypt.

Ex. 8:8 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said, "Entreat the LORD that He remove the frogs from me and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may sacrifice to the LORD."

Ex. 8:9 Moses said to Pharaoh, "The honor is yours to tell me: when shall I entreat for you and your servants and your people, that the frogs be destroyed from you and your houses, that they may be left only in the Nile?"

Ex. 8:10 Then he said, "Tomorrow." So he said, "May it be according to your word, that you may know that there is no one like the LORD our God.

Ex. 8:11 "The frogs will depart from you and your houses and your servants and your people; they will be left only in the Nile."

Ex. 8:12 Then Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh, and Moses cried to the LORD concerning the frogs which He had inflicted upon Pharaoh.

Ex. 8:13 The LORD did according to the word of Moses, and the frogs died out of the houses, the courts, and the fields.

Ex. 8:14 So they piled them in heaps, and the land became foul.

Ex. 8:15 But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and did not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

• The second judgment is a plague of frogs
  o As we said in our introduction last week, the first three judgments are milder than all that follow
    • They create temporary discomfort
And as with all the plagues, God takes a natural phenomenon and intensifies them to an uncomfortable and even deadly level.

For now, these are just uncomfortable.

- Once again, God tells Moses to warn Pharaoh:
  - God will smite Egypt with frogs.
  - The word smite is simply the word for strike.
  - From the Nile, the entire land will be invaded by Frogs:
    - The frogs will find their way into every place and will come to everyone.
    - Notice in v.4 God sends this plague against Pharaoh’s people but Israel isn’t mentioned.

- As before, Aaron stretches out the rod of Moses, and it leads to the invasion of frogs over the entire land of Egypt:
  - Here again we see Moses working through Aaron.
  - The first three plagues are done through the agency of Aaron:
    - And note that the rod of Moses plays a prominent part in the story through the Exodus.
    - As Moses is a picture of Jesus ruling over His people, then the rod of Moses is also a picture of Jesus’ rod of iron from the Psalms.
    - But unlike Jesus, Moses makes do with a wooden rod.

- The frog plague has a parallel to the Tribulation, just as with blood:
  - While there is no frog plague in Tribulation, there is a moment when demons enter the world to deceive the kings of the nations.
    - And in Rev 16:13 the spirits are called “frogs.”
  - The only explanation for God using that term to describe the demons would seem be to create the connection back to Exodus.
    - Once again the magicians copy this miracle.
This example gives us another piece of evidence to teach us the power of Satan

- Here we see him creating life, at least in the sense that he was able to bring more creatures to the event
- But notice again, he only counterfeits God’s work
  - Satan has the power to create life in the form of new frogs
  - But he lacked the power to simply get rid of the frogs that God already created
  - Which would seem the easier task? Yet Satan couldn’t do the thing Pharaoh would have wanted the most
- This is our proof that Satan’s power always remains in check by God
- But since we know Satan can perform miracles of this degree, we have all the more reason to stay close to Scripture and to the Spirit so that we aren’t drawn away by these powers

- The gods mocked by this plague are:
  - Hapi
    - This god was credited with bringing fertility to the land through the flooding of the Nile
    - Normally, the sound of frogs in Egypt is a welcome sign
    - It means the Nile is receding from the annual flood and the land has been made fertile by the flood waters and the time to plant has come
      - But the bothersome nature of the frogs mocks Hapi
  - Heqt
    - A goddess with the head of a frog and the body of a woman
    - The wife of Khnum and the emblem of fertility
- After the blood plague, Pharaoh simply turned and went into the palace, but after the frogs he asks Moses to intervene and seek relief
  - This tells us how onerous the frogs were for the Egyptians
They effect was more jarring than even having all water turn to blood.

When Moses hears the Pharaoh’s request, he asks Pharaoh to name the day for the frogs to go away.

- Pharaoh responds with tomorrow, perhaps thinking that was the best he could do.
- Moses says it will be as Pharaoh spoke so that he might know that Moses is working with the one and only God.

Then Moses immediately goes to God in prayer asking the Lord to give Pharaoh the relief he sought.

- We might have thought that God would leave the plague in place until it had the desired effect.
- But that’s missing the entire point of the plagues.
  - God can compel Pharaoh at any point, with or without plagues.
  - He could have simply placed it on Pharaoh’s heart to let them go.
    - Just as God did to Cyrus in Persia when He released Zerubbabel and the rest of Israel.
  - The purpose of the plagues is to demonstrate the power of God to Israel and the World.

So Moses intercedes for Pharaoh.

- How did Moses know that God would agree?
- Did Moses know in advance that his idea was consistent with God’s expectations?
  - Maybe God intended to let the judgment run seven days like the blood?

But God does as Moses requests.

- In v.13 we’re told that the Lord did according to the word of Moses.
- That seems like a backward sentence.
What we’re seeing here is a picture of intercession

- Moses picturing Christ, we see how Christ intercedes for us with the Father
- When we make a request of the Father that is in keeping with the Father’s desires, he receives that request by way of a mediator
- The Son, Christ, intercedes for us, and the Father does according to the Son’s intercession
  - This is not because Moses or even Christ has control over the Father
  - Rather, the Father has chosen Moses (and Christ) to represent Him
  - Therefore, the Father is willing to receive Moses’ request and act upon it, because it suited His purposes

But don’t miss the courage and boldness of Moses

- We are likewise commanded to go boldly into prayer because we have a Lord Who is interceding
- And when that prayer aligns with the heart of God, we can expect it to be met with acceptance
- So the closer we walk with the Lord, the more we’ll know his will and prayer in union with it

Based on that intercession, God causes the frogs to die

- And with the mass death of millions of frogs, the nation began to stink with rotting flesh
- As that plague passed, the Pharaoh let the misery of it fade from his mind
  - So he hardened his heart
  - So far, the Lord has no need to step in and harden on top of what Pharaoh is willing to do on his own

Now the final plague of the first series arrives, and as the pattern dictates, it comes without warning
Ex. 8:16 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the earth, that it may become gnats through all the land of Egypt.’”

Ex. 8:17 They did so; and Aaron stretched out his hand with his staff, and struck the dust of the earth, and there were gnats on man and beast. All the dust of the earth became gnats through all the land of Egypt.

Ex. 8:18 The magicians tried with their secret arts to bring forth gnats, but they could not; so there were gnats on man and beast.

Ex. 8:19 Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, “This is the finger of God.” But Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he did not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

- As with all of the first three, Aaron is the actor bringing the plague to Egypt
  - As he strikes his staff on the earth, the dust of the ground becomes something
    - My English Bible says gnats, others say lice
    - But the Hebrew word is an enigma
    - Dr. Fruchtenbaum suggests it means mixture, as in a mixture of insects
      - That’s probably the best description we have
  - This plague brings a mixture of insects upon Egypt
    - The mixture includes insects like gnats that annoy and others like lice that infest the body
    - Still others make have spoiled food and others made sleep difficult
    - The purpose was an infestation so severe it made life miserable
  - When looking for a parallel in the time of Tribulation, we have to look at little harder, because there is no direct reference to insects
    - We know there are two witnesses who have the power to bring plagues
    - And the description in Revelation is this

Rev. 11:6 These have the power to shut up the sky, so that rain will not fall during the days of their prophesying; and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every plague, as often as they desire.
We might assume that the plagues these men bring include a plague similar to this one

- We can make that assumption simply because it refers to them turning water to blood and to strike (or smite) the earth with every plague
  - It doesn’t say to strike with whatever plague they want
  - Rather, it says they strike with every plague, as if there were a prescribed number of plagues that must be sent through these men
- Taken together, the reference to blood and every plague suggests strongly that they are called to mimic the plagues of Egypt

• Now for the first time, the magicians couldn’t replicate the miracle
  o It’s not clear why Satan can no longer counterfeit the miracle
    - But the mere fact that Satan hit a limit tells us that Satan has limits
    - Soon enough, God’s power is seen to be clearly greater than Satan’s
  o When they can’t replicate it, the magicians correctly declare that this plague is from the finger of God
    - Now we see the plagues having their desired effect among the Egyptians
  o The plague also had the effect of mocking the Egyptian priesthood
    - Egyptian priests were scrupulous about cleanliness, as was required by Egyptian practice
    - They shaved their entire bodies to remove all hair in an attempt to ensure no insects were living on their body
      - During this plague, the priesthood is mocked by their inability to keep the insects off their bodies
  o Regarding the gods of Egypt, this plague mocked:
    - Uatchit - protected Egyptians from swarming insects
Seb - protecting people from lice

Nevertheless, Pharaoh’s heart was hardened and the process moves forward.

**Ex. 8:20** Now the LORD said to Moses, “Rise early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh, as he comes out to the water, and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, “Let My people go, that they may serve Me.”

**Ex. 8:21** “For if you do not let My people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies on you and on your servants and on your people and into your houses; and the houses of the Egyptians will be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground on which they dwell.

**Ex. 8:22** “But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where My people are living, so that no swarms of flies will be there, in order that you may know that I, the LORD, am in the midst of the land.

**Ex. 8:23** “I will put a division between My people and your people. Tomorrow this sign will occur.”

**Ex. 8:24** Then the LORD did so. And there came great swarms of flies into the house of Pharaoh and the houses of his servants and the land was laid waste because of the swarms of flies in all the land of Egypt.

**Ex. 8:25** Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said, “Go, sacrifice to your God within the land.”

**Ex. 8:26** But Moses said, “It is not right to do so, for we will sacrifice to the LORD our God what is an abomination to the Egyptians. If we sacrifice what is an abomination to the Egyptians before their eyes, will they not then stone us?

**Ex. 8:27** “We must go a three days’ journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to the LORD our God as He commands us.”

**Ex. 8:28** 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. Make supplication for me.”

**Ex. 8:29** Then Moses said, ‘Behold, I am going out from you, and I shall make supplication to the LORD that the swarms of flies may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people tomorrow; only do not let Pharaoh deal deceitfully again in not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD.”

**Ex. 8:30** So Moses went out from Pharaoh and made supplication to the LORD.

**Ex. 8:31** The LORD did as Moses asked, and removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants and from his people; not one remained.

**Ex. 8:32** But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and he did not let the people go.

- The next judgment begins the next series of three, so the first plague comes with a warning in the morning
  - God promises now that He will send biting flies
  - Remember the first series produce severe annoyances

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But each plague left the people largely untouched
And the effects were temporary and quickly reversible
Now the plagues get progressively worse and begin to impact people and animals in severe ways

- This plague will bring swarms of biting flies to the Egyptians, but not to the people of Israel
- In fact, from this point forward, the judgments are specifically directed at only the Egyptians
- The earlier judgments were of a type that even Israel was impacted
  - But from here on the severity is too great for God’s people to be included

- This pattern also mirrors the judgments of Tribulation
  - The Tribulation judgments comes in three sets as well, and like Exodus, the first set of judgments impacts all people, including believers on earth
  - When the second set of judgments begin, the Lord begins to make distinctions
  - The trumpet judgment are sent against those without the seal of God

- Notice in v.24 that the arrival of the flies comes by the Lord alone
  - For this series of judgments, God acts alone to bring them to Pharaoh
  - The arrival of the flies made the land lay waste, we’re told
    - The strength of that phrase gives us an indication of how severe this plague was for Egypt
    - A description of the event from Keil and Delitzsch:

"When enraged, they fasten themselves upon the human body, especially upon the edges of the eyelids. . . . [they] not only tortured, 'devoured' (Ps. 78:45) the men, and disfigured them by the swellings produced by their sting, but also killed the plants in which they deposited their eggs . . . ."
"The blood-sucking gadfly or dogfly was something to be abhorred and may in part have been responsible for the great deal of blind men in the land. . . .

- In response, Pharaoh is finally moved to negotiate, the first of three times he will attempt to negotiate
  - He hopes he can persuade Moses to accept something less than he is asking
  - His first proposal is to have Israel sacrifice to their God as they desired, but they must do it in the land of Egypt
    - Obviously, Pharaoh knows that if Israel is released to worship outside the land, they will never return
    - So he is looking for a way to keep the slave labor
  - Interestingly, Moses addresses this offer by objecting to a detail in Pharaoh’s plan
    - He notes that the animals Israel will sacrifice are animals Egypt either detests (like sheep) or worships (like bulls)
    - In either case, the sight of Israelites working with such animals in a sacrifice would so deeply offend Egyptian culture it would lead to a riot and stoning of the Jews
    - Remember, as slaves they could be killed with impunity by any Egyptian, so the threat was real
  - Still, we might have expect Moses to simply say that God wasn’t interested in a compromise
    - Instead, Moses proves to be a tough negotiator, able to stand up to politicians and stick to his guns
    - Moses would have made a great NRA president
  - This leads Pharaoh to offer another concession
    - They can go into the desert, but just don’t go too far
      - It’s becoming more and more obvious that Pharaoh’s chief concern is the escape of the slaves
      - He is trying to keep the nation close at hand and prevent their departure
But because Moses began to negotiate on the terms of the deal, now he has little choice but to accept the compromise

- Perhaps he assumed that if they made it in to the desert at all, that would be enough to ensure their departure
- Or perhaps he knew that Pharaoh would go back on his deal
  - The later seems likely because in v.29 Moses says don’t deal deceitfully with us
  - Moses is preparing for disappointment

- So, once again Moses intercedes for Pharaoh and the flies leave
  - These flies were not going to stop biting until Moses prayed, so the intercession was necessary to stop the plague
    - As expected, however, the Pharaoh decided they had survived another plague, so why let the people go
    - In fact, we must imagine at this point that the on again, off again pattern of the plagues played into Pharaoh’s self-deception

- When we experience God’s displeasure on an occasional basis, it’s tempting often to think that the worst is behind us
  - We let the hope that the past won’t repeat itself give us reason to go on sinning
  - That’s a foolish game, because God always has more staying power and more options
  - We can’t let God’s forbearance become our ignorant excuse to go on sinning

_Heb. 10:26_ For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, _Heb. 10:27_ but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES.

- Finally, the gods mocked by this judgment
  - Principally one: Baalzebub - lord of the flies
  - This is the pagan demon closely associated with Satan himself
• The second plague in the second series also comes with a warning

Ex. 9:1 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go to Pharaoh and speak to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, “Let My people go, that they may serve Me."

Ex. 9:2 “For if you refuse to let them go and continue to hold them,

Ex. 9:3 behold, the hand of the LORD will come with a very severe pestilence on your livestock which are in the field, on the horses, on the donkeys, on the camels, on the herds, and on the flocks.

Ex. 9:4 “But the LORD will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt, so that nothing will die of all that belongs to the sons of Israel.”’

Ex. 9:5 The LORD set a definite time, saying, “Tomorrow the LORD will do this thing in the land.”

Ex. 9:6 So the LORD did this thing on the next day, and all the livestock of Egypt died; but of the livestock of the sons of Israel, not one died.

Ex. 9:7 Pharaoh sent, and behold, there was not even one of the livestock of Israel dead. But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.

• Now God brings pestilence to the livestock of Egypt

  o Pestilence is any disease

    ▪ Some believe this is anthrax, which is extremely deadly for animals

    ▪ Now for the first time the Egyptians are going to suffer loss of personal property

  o But God offers some mercy to the Egyptians, at least for a time

    ▪ The pestilence impacted only the livestock in the field, which would have been most of the them

    ▪ Those that were still left in the stables were not impacted

    ▪ They become fodder for a future plague

  o Still, this is a massive loss of life among livestock

    ▪ Except that the livestock of Israel are left untouched

    ▪ Again, the distinction is useful to God in showing Himself to be the God of the Hebrews

• The Pharaoh wanted to know for sure that what Moses told him was true
o He sought as to whether the livestock of Israel survived
  ▪ Historical records indicate that this Pharaoh was particularly given to worshipping cattle
  ▪ Gispen wrote

"Amenhotep II surpassed all his predecessors in his fanatical devotion to the worship of animals, and especially of the bull. In 1906 a statue made of sandstone was excavated representing a cow and Amenhotep II leaning his head under its head; he is also depicted kneeling under a cow, drinking its divine milk. He is thus seen as child and slave of the cow goddess. What a threat this must have been to him!

o Speaking of the gods mocked in this judgment
  ▪ Apis Bull - the sacred bull always kept out in the open
  ▪ Mnevis - sacred bull of the god Ra
  ▪ Hathor - goddess with a head of a cow and body of a woman
  ▪ Knom - Ram-like god

o This judgment mirrors the fourth seal judgment, which brings pestilence to the world
  • Unsurprisingly, Pharaoh doesn’t relent at all
  o This is on stubborn man
  o His nation has lost significant wealth but still he holds on
  • The final plague of the second series and the final plague of the night comes without warning again

Ex. 9:8 Then the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Take for yourselves handfuls of soot from a kiln, and let Moses throw it toward the sky in the sight of Pharaoh.
Ex. 9:9 "It will become fine dust over all the land of Egypt, and will become boils breaking out with sores on man and beast through all the land of Egypt.”
Ex. 9:10 So they took soot from a kiln, and stood before Pharaoh; and Moses threw it toward the sky, and it became boils breaking out with sores on man and beast.
Ex. 9:11 The magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils, for the boils were on the magicians as well as on all the Egyptians.
Ex. 9:12 And the LORD hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he did not listen to them, just as the LORD had spoken to Moses.
• God turns dust into boils on the bodies of the Egyptians
  
  o The dust is taken from the Jewish kilns
    - These are the ovens used to make bricks
    - This connection gave the Jews a chance to see God working for their revenge in the face of their harsh treatment
    - I wonder if during these period of the plagues, the Egyptians started treating Israel better or worse?
  
  o Boils is exactly like one of the Tribulation judgments
    - These boils were on every man, including the magicians
    - It made the magicians look particularly foolish when they couldn’t mimic or even escape the effect of this plague
  
  o The magicians were still trying to counter Moses’ work, but this time they couldn’t stand before Pharaoh
    - The reason was because they were bed-ridden with the sores

• Since we know that all the plagues were an intensification of existing natural phenomenon, the question arrives what kind of sickness is this?
  
  o One theory was proposed by Keil and Delitzsch:

  The natural substratum of this plague is discovered by most commentators in the so-called Nile-blisters, which come out in innumerable little pimples upon the scarlet-coloured skin, and change in a short space of time into small, round, and thickly-crowded blisters. This is called by the Egyptians Hamm el Nil, or the heat of the inundation. According to Dr. Bilharz, it is a rash, which occurs in summer, chiefly towards the close at the time of the overflowing of the Nile, and produces a burning and pricking sensation upon the skin; or, in Seetzen's words, 'it consists of small, red, and slightly rounded elevations in the skin, which give strong twitches and slight stinging sensations, resembling those of scarlet fever'. The cause of this eruption, which occurs only in men and not in animals, has not been determined; some attributing it to the water, and others to the heat.

• The gods impacted by this judgment were the Egyptian gods of healing
  
  o Sekhmet - body of a woman and the head of a lioness and had power or epidemics
- Serapis - god of healing
- Imhotep - god of medicine

- Finally, notice that now comes the time for God to harden Pharaoh's heart
  - Apparently, the boils might have been enough to bring Pharaoh around had God not stopped him from relenting
  - These sores must have been so painful, that the thought of continuing would have been too much
    - But God's plan must continue, so Pharaoh is hardened against the prospect of allowing the Israelites to continue

- Next time we finish the plagues, including moving into the tenth plague