

## STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF MOSES

**Taught in Ambassador's Class of Peninsula Bible Church, Palo Alto, California**

**January 1980 thru June 1980**

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**Lesson #9, Exodus 8:1-23 - March 2, 1980, 2nd plague frogs, 3rd lice, 4th flies**

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Today we are looking at Exodus 8, but, before we get into the lesson, I'd like to share a little with you. I am a very hostile person this week. I do not want to take cardiac rehabilitation, and everybody knows it. On that program you are required to exercise three times a week while two nurses stand over you with a big bull whip. You are monitored on screens, and you cannot cheat. I don't have the time, and I don't have the inclination for this. Sure, I need exercise; I need discipline, but I don't have the time. Then, glory be, I looked at the small print on my company health insurance policy, and it says you only get cardiac rehabilitation after a heart attack. Well, they got me on the table at Stanford before I had a heart attack. So, I call the company up. "No, can't handle you." Called the insurance company. "No, can't handle you." I was home free. It was like being delivered from Egypt. I was the happiest guy in the world. My wife was kind of upset, but I was legally right. I wouldn't have to do that dumb discipline which would interfere with my life. Well, unfortunately, the Lord didn't seem to understand. During the night, I woke up and realized the church had a program called Blue Cross which I come under. So, I thought to be fair I had better call up Blue Cross. What do you think those dirty guys did? They took me. They took me! I told them, "I haven't had a heart attack. Do you know that?" They replied, "Yes, that's O.K. We don't have a problem with that. We'll take you." My wife just roared. I have been so angry with God, the world, my cardiologist, faith, whatever. I do not want to be rehabilitated, and I now understand Pharaoh better than I have ever understood him before. I am on his side this morning. You may be Moses, but I am Pharaoh. So, with that little bit of background, let's look at Moses and Pharaoh.

We're on plague number two this morning. Remember God had a miracle performed when Aaron threw down his staff and it became a "serpent." Pharaoh called his magicians who, using their black arts which I believe were demonic, threw down their staffs, and they became serpents. Whereupon Moses's crocodiles, serpents, reptiles [Whatever they were, the word is dragon, literally] ate up theirs. Pharaoh had a miracle from his magicians, but he also saw the overwhelming power of God's miracle versus his miracle. Before plague number 1, God had revealed Himself to Pharaoh as "Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews," and He wanted Pharaoh to let His people go. It is a formula He has Moses repeat time and time again, "Go to Pharaoh, tell him, 'I am Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews. Let My people go.'" But Pharaoh hardens his heart. God approaches him again and asks him to, "Let My people go," but Pharaoh won't. So God turns the Nile into blood and destroys all the fish in it. The whole Nile stank. This was pointed at one of the most important gods of Egypt because their whole economy depended upon that god and the Nile. But that didn't bother Pharaoh. He could go into his palace and get away from the stench. He could send out his slaves to dig back away from the Nile where the filtering sand would cleanse the water. So this display didn't really hit home.

Pharaoh shut out God. He shut out God's will, and he kind of presumed on God's grace. You don't do that with God. So God is going to get quite personal now because He doesn't want Pharaoh to perish. He really wants him to come to repentance. My Bible says that God is "long-suffering" in His attitude toward us, that "He is not willing that any should perish but that all should come, ALL, should come to a change of mind." In the passage

describing the last days, there are many false teachers; there are many false prophets; there are many people demonically possessed. Satan is very very active at that time, and there are people from whom God is seeking repentance. They are vicious, nasty, hostile Christian killing people, but God withholds judgment from them in those last days that they might have a chance to repent. So we have this same picture 3500 years before.

There is another picture here too. Behind the scenes there is a real war going on. The basic issue is between God and Satan. Remember what God told Moses when he was back in Midian? "So back into Egypt and you tell them this, this and this." And what did Moses say? "I have no eloquence. I can't speak." God's reply! "I will be your mouth. I will teach you what to say." In other words, "The words that come out of your mouth will not be yours. They will be mine." I think Moses must have spent 7 to 10 months in terror saying things he never wanted to say. He was required to go beard Pharaoh in his den with some rather categorical statements about Pharaoh's character and about what God was going to do to Pharaoh. But he was the mouth piece of Yahweh. Well, who was the mouth of Satan? Pharaoh. So you have two opposing forces here and a cosmic battle going on in the invisible realm. The basic issue, however, is between God and Pharaoh, and we are going to see an interesting way in which Satan works in the lives of the people here.

So, let's start in Exodus, chapter 8, verse 1 with the second plague. This is the plague of the frogs. Now you and I think of these little fat bull frogs which have delightful legs. I love them french fried. But the frogs here are kind of like toads. They are rather small and slimy and associated with the annual inundation of the Nile. So they were associated with fruitfulness, blessedness, with a good harvest and were naturally deified. Their "frog goddess" was goddess of both fertility and resurrection. I want you to remember those two because God really sticks it to this goddess; He really puts her down. Fertility, resurrection. You could not, by the way, kill a frog. They were sacred. In fact, if you intentionally killed a frog, you were put to death. In some cases, if you unintentionally killed a frog, you were put to death. Remember that law in light of what is going to happen here, and you will understand the problem they were facing. They could not kill one single frog.

Exodus 8:1:

**Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and say to him [Here's this formula again], 'Thus says the LORD [Yahweh], "Let My people go, that they may serve Me. But if you refuse to let them go, behold, I will smite your whole territory with frogs. And the Nile will swarm with frogs, which will come up and go into your house [Remember Pharaoh could flee to the palace before but not this time] 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 [So these are little frogs. They can get in anywhere. They are not big fat ones that can't get through the cracks. These guys can get in any crack there is in the house. They can get in the little bowls, the big bowls. They can sneak up into your bed. At night you slide into this slimy bed, and you can't kill these little creatures. You can coax them out. Ease them out. That is a goddess you are dealing with. You don't get goddesses mad at you. They are very emotional creatures. So here is the slime and the frog in your bed and your are tired, but you have to be nice. You can kind of get the impact of what God is doing. He has a delightful sense of humor except, of course, when He aims it at me.] So the frogs will come up on you and your people and all your servants [Pharaoh and his people and all his courtiers, the wisemen, the magicians, the sorcerers, the priests]."' Then the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your hand with your staff over the rivers, over the streams [that is the canals] and over the pools [the cisterns they kept around there], and make frogs come up on the land of Egypt.'" So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. And the magicians did the same with their secret arts, making frogs come up on the land of Egypt.**

Interesting! Remember Pharaoh instigated the opposition to Moses. He had his magicians perform their black arts in order to prove to himself that he was still a god, that he still had power and the gods of Egypt equaled the God Yahweh. Well, the last thing Pharaoh needs from his magicians at this point, to prove he is god in Egypt, is more frogs. And that is exactly what God gives him. The magicians do use their demonic powers, and they do bring up frogs, and it is a real act of supernatural power, I believe. But do you notice how God controls the supernatural. We have a tendency sometimes, I think, to give Satan too much credit. We should never ever sell him short, but I think we have a tendency to see him as a god. But the Bible does not see him that way. He is apparently God's highest creation. He was the covering cherub, and the cherubs are involved with the holiness of God. Apparently

he had a very special relationship with God before his fall. He is a mighty being in the hierarchy of angels, so mighty that Michael the Archangel could not dispute with him or rebuke him directly when they fought over the body of Moses. Michael had to call, "The Lord rebuke you," so Satan ranks higher than Michael. He did not lose his rank when he fell. There is still a hierarchical order in heaven. There is a hierarchical order on earth. We are to obey the authorities down here whether they are a Nero or a good solid Republican president. It is because a bad emperor is better than no emperor. God has a hierarchical order in the world, and He has a hierarchical order in heaven. Satan is quite a guy, but he is a created being, and he does what God says and goes only as far as God lets him go. Here he would love to drive the frogs back into the Nile, but all he can do is create more frogs, more slimy creatures.

Psalm 2 really lives. I just love Psalm 2, and you can see how it lives here. I'll just read the first 4 verses.

Psalm 2:

**Why are the nations in an uproar, And the peoples devising a vain thing? The kings of the earth [like Pharaoh] take their stand, And the rulers take counsel together Against the LORD and against His Anointed [His Messiah]: Let us tear their fetters apart, And cast away their cords from us [This was the word of the kings again the Lord]! He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them.**

"Mess with Me, and I'll give you more frogs. Give it your best shot Satan," and he does, and there are more frogs. About this time I might suggest, the Israelites who have been involved in this sensual fertility cult are beginning to think about what they have been doing lately. Fertility is not such a big deal anymore. This place is so fertile it is driving them crazy.

Now we move on.

Exodus 8:8:

**Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron [It shows to what great lengths he has to go to call for help. He is sinning against light. The magicians can only bring more frogs. Only Yahweh can clean up the Nile. Only Yahweh can clean up the frogs that come from the Nile] and said, "Entreat the LORD [Yahweh] 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." And 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?"**

I'll bet about this time Moses is beginning to twitch. It is one thing to go before Pharaoh and with your staff bloody the Nile which then runs its course for seven days. But now God has him go in there and, before he can stop himself, tell Pharaoh, "O.K. I'll clean it up for you; you name the time." This is a lot different than before. Now he is committed, "Tomorrow."

Why would Pharaoh say tomorrow and not today? If I had a mess of frogs in my sack, I would want them out, NOW! What is Pharaoh kind of hoping? Frogs like water. They like moisture, don't they? "Maybe in the hot Egyptian sun, just maybe, they'll go back into the Nile of their own accord, and I won't have to acknowledge Yahweh."

Have you ever tried that, making deals with God? It happens all the time in warfare. When you get overseas, and they are shooting at you, you make all kinds of promises which you have no intention of keeping, but boy you make promises. "If I survive this, Lord, I will do this, this, this and this." And that stays in your mind just long enough for you to get back to safe territory. Who's the first guy off the ship headed for the bar in the officer's club? What happened to all those dedicated promises? They were left back out across the water. Who needs God in a safe area in the officer's club? I only need Him out there.

Pharaoh is kind of hoping he won't be stuck with having to acknowledge that Yahweh is God if the frogs go back

into the Nile naturally.

That is a clear picture, by the way, of how Satan works to get you to refuse to deal with sin in your life. Satan's assault will be the one he used in the very beginning. How did Satan first get a person to sin or probably to deal with the sin that was already starting to ferment a little. He went to Eve not Adam. He saw something in Eve that was fermenting, possibly because she was more emotionally involved than Adam. But what did he say to Eve to encourage the sin? What was the big lie?

**Class comment:** "Hath God said."

**Bob's response:** Yeah! "Hath God said." Then "You surely shall not die." Hebrew is very strong, "You surely shall NOT die." Emphatic! When you want to lie, lie big and lie emphatically. Just say it straight out. Pharaoh does that here. He has no intention of letting the Hebrews go. It says so at the end of the section here. Moses warned him, "Don't be deceitful again in not letting the people go to sacrifice to their Lord."

We use the big lie to avoid facing up to sin in our lives. "I'm not really in bondage to this thing. I can quit any time I want." Yeah, sure you can. Or "It isn't really hurting me. Not really." We tell ourselves these little stories. Let's talk about smoking. I'm an expert at quitting. I quit every three months for ten years. What did I say? "I'm not really hooked. I can quit just like that." Except when I had a drink I had to have a cigarette. They go together like coffee and donuts, bread and butter. Then back I was to two packs a day. Then you say, "Well, it isn't really hurting me," except for what those statistics say. I had a roommate in the Naval hospital. We were both in with throat tumors. Mine was benign. His was malignant. I lost a portion of my throat. He lost his life. I've got news for you; I quit smoking. Statistics are quite impersonal until all of a sudden you are the statistic. I was telling myself the big lie. I'm not really hooked, I just can't quit. I read an interesting article in Readers Digest about a cancer clinic, and it mentioned the people there whose cancer was the result of cigarettes. One of them lost his total voice-box, had had his whole throat removed and was breathing through a tube. You know what he did? He smoked through that tube. He was killing himself. He had lost his voice-box to cancer and was still dragging on cigarettes.

That's the way we often start out dealing with our sin, "The big lie." "It's not really sin. I'm not really in bondage to it. It really isn't hurting me, therefore, I don't have to do anything about it." That is the way Satan works.

Exodus 8:10:

**Then he [Pharaoh] said, "Tomorrow." So he [Moses] said, "May it be according to your word, that you may know that there is no one like the LORD our God [Yahweh the God of the plagues]. And the frogs will depart from you and your houses and your servants and your people; they will be left only in the Nile." [He even lays out perimeters] Then Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh, and Moses cried to the LORD concerning the frogs which He had inflicted upon Pharaoh. And the LORD did according to the word of Moses, and the frogs died out of the houses, the courts, and the fields. So they piled them in heaps, and the land became foul [literally "stank"]. But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and did not listen to them, as the LORD had said.**

What does God do with this goddess? She is the goddess of fertility, remember, and man does He make her fertile. But she is also the goddess of resurrection. What happened to the frogs? How many rose from the dead? None! They stank. They rotted. They were piled up in heaps. The land stank. The Nile just got through stinking up Egypt. Egypt is a very narrow land, so when the Nile smells, all Egypt smells. The god of fertility becomes too fertile and the god of the resurrection can't raise anything, so it all rots. God is trying to give a very graphic picture of the impotence of the gods of Egypt. And He is trying to show it particularly to whom? Pharaoh. He doesn't want to have to kill or destroy Pharaoh. He doesn't like to destroy Egypt or even the courtiers or the magicians of Egypt. He goes out of His way to show them, but if you do not listen to or obey God, He spans you. So every third plague in this series is a spanking. We have triads. One, two, three; one, two three; one, two, three and then POW the tenth plague. Every third plague God just zaps them. He doesn't give them any warning. He doesn't tell them what He is doing. He just smacks them down with it. You presume on the grace of God, and you get a

spanking. So you will see it in the third plague, in the sixth plague, and in the ninth plague.

Exodus 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.'" And 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. And the magicians tried with their secret arts to bring forth gnats, but they could not; so there were gnats on man and beast. Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God [Notice it is not Yahweh. Elohim some god. They will not acknowledge the God of the plagues/slaves yet]." But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he did not listen to them, as the LORD had said.**

These gnats are very minute. They are kind of the equivalent of the gnats of the Southwest. In Arizona they are vile. They hide in Juniper trees and bite with a very irritating bite. You really can't see them they are so small, but they sting like the dickens, and you are extremely uncomfortable. When they assault you, you really get the message. So, God produces a swarm of "no see-ums" which create masses of red welts on all the people in Egypt. Now we don't know which god is the god involved here. Harry Rimmer's book "Dead Men Tell Tales" gives a spectrum of gods and goddesses that are involved in these various plagues. But I think God is striking at something far different than that. I think he is striking at THE god of Egypt Pharaoh and also the priests that supported the god system. Pharaoh was god of Egypt and the priests were the power of Egypt. They literally ruled Egypt. They controlled the minds and the hearts of the people. Remember back in the days of Joseph when God put Joseph in as Prime Minister of Egypt? When the time came to gather in all the grain, he never touched the priests. Their grain was inviolable. They had power. They had clout. Joseph bought all the cattle, all the money, all the houses and possessions and all the bodies of all the Egyptians during that time of seven years of famine, but he never touched the priests. They kept everything that was theirs. They were holy under the god. What they said went. They literally controlled the minds and the hearts of the Egyptians who were extremely religious people. Now the strange part about the priests [especially in view of this plague] was that they emphasized physical purity. They were circumcised. They shaved all the hair off their bodies and kept it shaved. They washed a number of times a day going through various rituals.

One of their duties, as a little aside here, was they took care of the gods. As a priest in charge of a god, a typical pattern would be to go in the morning to the big temple, unbolt the door [you had to keep grave robbers out of the god's temple], go in, slam and bolt the door behind you, [nobody got to see what was happening to a god. A god you had to dress doesn't look so great], wake up your god with a certain incantation, lift him up, stand him up, dress him in all he gorgeous finery, feed him breakfast and then, of course, open the door. There were other feedings during the day. Then at night the priest would go in again, slam and bolt the door behind him, undress his god and lay him down in bed, do the incantations for a good night's rest, walk out, slam and lock the door. It was like adult doll playing. That was the gods of Egypt. Now, these people weren't dummies. These were highly intelligent people. The philosophy, the arts, the science of Egypt was thousands of years ahead of its time. They had exceptional knowledge we realize from archaeology now. And who controlled all of this? The priests of the god.

Now here are all the priests who emphasize physical purity covered with big red welts. They didn't wear that much clothing in those days either. Pharaoh went around in a kind of sarong. The irony is that Pharaoh's own magicians cannot even increase the problem this time. God said, "This far and no farther." Satan can't even increase the problem. He not only cannot redeem the problem, he cannot even increase it. And so the magicians says, "This is the finger of Elohim." They can't bring themselves to say Yahweh. He is the God of the slaves. Remember he introduced Himself, "I am Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews, the slaves." They can't bring themselves to say, "Hey, there is a God of those slaves with power that is greater than our power." They do acknowledge, however, "There is a god out there who has greater power than us," and they warn Pharaoh.

Interesting enough Pharaoh knows how to get the plague stopped doesn't he? How did he get the plague of the frogs stopped? He called for Moses and Aaron. When the magicians could only increase the trouble, he

summoned Moses and Aaron. He said, "Entreat Yahweh for me to take away the plague." But, you see, Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh first then. In spankings Moses and Aaron did not go to Pharaoh at all. What would Pharaoh rather do than humble himself to someone? What is he willing to do to himself, to his priests, to his land, to his people? Let the plague run its course. Let them suffer as long as God allows it, "I am not going to call those two Jews in here. They have got to come to me." Sound kind of natural? The tragedy is the pride of self is a far greater slave master than anything else. Pharaoh is a far greater slave than the Israelites. He is enslaved to the most severe slave-master of all time, himself, and as long as self is on the throne, as long as self is his god, then he will not and cannot give in. As long as he can keep those Jews in the land no matter what happens to Egypt, he wins. It may destroy Egypt. It may destroy himself, but he WINS!

Do you know what one of the primary reasons for suicide is? It is not just depression, as you might suspect. One of the primary reasons for suicide is revenge. "I am going to get even with my family, or my friends, or my boss or whoever caused my problem. I am going to get even." So what do I do? "I am going to destroy myself. That will make them guilty, and I'll get revenge. It will sure taste sweet." The problem, of course, with that thinking is you aren't around to enjoy the victory. But do you see the perversion of human nature? Don't pick at Pharaoh. Anybody in this room, including myself, is capable of reaching a point of self-worship where I am willing to kill me to get even with you. That happens all the time. It is one of the primary causes of suicide. Normal rational people, we call them. Of all the dumb things to do is not to be around to enjoy the fruits of your victory.

Now God gets a little nastier. He is determined to get Pharaoh's attention. He moves into what are "dog flies." They are called insects here but the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, which was made by Jewish scholars living in that environment in Egypt 200 years before Christ, calls them "dog-flies" with good reason. Dog-flies are very vicious. They are small flies and cling to the human body. They suck the blood. They particularly attack around the eyes, the lids of the eyes, the corners of the eyes. There was massive blindness in Egypt in those days and probably to a large degree caused by dog-flies. They are very infectious, very vicious and very hurtful. They are blood suckers. They get in your nose, your ears, your eyes, everywhere, any opening they can get into when they are enraged. So this is what God brings up.

Now, at this point something changes. Up until now, God has been telling Moses, "Tell Aaron to go do this. Tell Aaron to go do that." From now on God tells Moses to go do this. Moses talks to Pharaoh. Moses does this or that. Kind of interesting. What did God tell Moses back in Midian about what He wanted him to do? What did He tell him first of all to do? He said, "Go to Egypt and tell them this." Moses tried every trick he could think of to evade. Remember the five objections. God even promised, "I will be your mouth in Egypt. I'll be a mouth to you, and I will teach you what to say." And Moses's fifth objection at that word was, "Lord, send anybody but me. I will not go back to Egypt, and I will not talk to Pharaoh. Send anybody but me." So God said, "O.K., Aaron will be your mouthpiece. You tell Aaron what I say to you, and Aaron will tell Pharaoh what he is to do." But God never loses to anybody. Moses got a temporary victory but do you remember what it cost him? Remember what we studied back there when he is compared with Jesus Christ? In Hebrews he is compared to "Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our calling." I believe Moses would not only have been the Apostle, ambassador, but also High Priest had he obeyed God. He never got it. Aaron was given the High Priesthood, and Aaron is nothing. All through our studies you are going to see Moses as a great mediator not Aaron. But God wins. In plague #4 God starts dealing directly with Moses. But what has God done for Moses? He didn't start with plague number one you notice. Even when God wins, He is a loving, gracious God. He understands out gutlessness. What does God wait for? What have Moses and Aaron done so far in front of Pharaoh? God doesn't make them go back with the first miracle and throw down a stick and start doing all the talking then. No, He waits through three plagues that have been exceedingly vicious plagues and allows Moses to gain some faith, to gain some sense of trust in God, of the adequacy of God. So God is still gracious even when He is disciplining Moses. So in verse 20 we get the dog-flies.

Exodus 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 [Yahweh], "Let My people go, that they may serve Me. For if you will not let My people go, behold, I will send swarms of insects on you [That's**

not a good translation. There is a play on words here. "If you will not let My people loose, behold, I will loose swarms or insects on you, swarms of dog-flies on you" **and on your servants and on your people** [I will take care of you, your courtiers, your magicians, your sorcerers and the whole of Egypt] **and into your houses; and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of insects** [dog-flies], **and also the ground on which they dwell. But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen** [The dwelling place of the Israelites. A lot of Egyptians were up there also], **where My people are living, so that no swarms of insects will be there, in order that you may know that I, the LORD** [Yahweh], **am in the midst of the land.**

What's He doing? Why is He insisting that they know that He is Yahweh doing this? What did the magicians try to get away with? The magicians will not face up to the fact that He is Yahweh? They only call Him a god. They are trying to save face. He says, "O.K. I am going to give you a sign that will show you whose God I am. You don't like the God of the slaves." It is very humiliating to be kicked around Egypt by a God of a bunch of slaves when you are the slave masters. You keep weaseling out of it and kidding yourself and rationalizing that it is not really Yahweh, the God of the slaves doing this to you, but an Elohim, some god all right with more power than you've got, but not Yahweh. "O.K., I'm going to put up a little test here. I am going to have these dog-flies, which are very vicious, not well organized, no set rules about where they go, cover the whole land of Egypt except Goshen where My people dwell, in order that you may know that I, the LORD [Yahweh] am in the midst of the land." Remember that phrase "in the midst of the land" Satan is going to use that. "It is Me that is doing it. You have to acknowledge that"

Exodus 8:23:

**"And I will put a division** [literally deliverance I will put redemption, in other words] **between My people and your people. Tomorrow this sign shall occur."** **Then the LORD did so. And there came great swarms of insects** [the word for great is heavy or intense or severe. This was a very vicious plague] **into the house of Pharaoh and the houses of his servants and the land was laid waste because of the swarms of insects in all the land of Egypt.**

Why does God say tomorrow? Pharaoh said tomorrow but he was probably hoping the frogs would wander back into the moisture of the Nile, and he wouldn't have to face up to the fact that this was Yahweh's doing. But why does God say tomorrow? Why did He give them twenty-four hours? They have twenty-four hours to think it over. They've been through dog-flies plagues before, but nothing like this one. He gives them twenty-four hours of grace to reconsider their position before He hits them. He really doesn't want to hurt them. We don't have a brutal God up there, a torturer, a sadistic monster. He really doesn't want to hurt them, so He gives them twenty-four hours to think about it and repent.

We'll have to take the rest of that passage next time. Remember as you read through the rest of the plagues, through nine anyway, the phrase "in the midst of the land" verse 22 and "within the land" verse 25 and watch the Satanic twist.

Father, we just thank You so much for the way You show Your power and yet You show Your grace and Your mercy right along with it. We just thank You that You are such a sovereign God that we can trust our eternal existence in Your hands and You are such a gracious God that we can come to You as a father and know that we will be accepted and Your child. Father, we just thank You so much that You love us enough to hurt us if You have to that You are not willing that any should perish not even the Pharaoh, that You want all men to come to a change of mind and therefore You will do whatever is necessary to bring us to that point of decision with the exception, of course, in Your will. Father, we thank You so much for Your forbearance for Your mercy and Your grace, and we thank You in Jesus' name. Amen

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