



An Unsaving Faith

May 11, 2025

Exodus 8:1-19

Clint Pressley

*8 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go in 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 plague all your country with frogs. <sup>3</sup> The Nile shall swarm with frogs that shall come up into your house and into your bedroom and on your bed and into the houses of your servants and your people, and into your ovens and your kneading bowls. <sup>4</sup> The frogs shall come up on you and on your people and on all your servants."'" <sup>5</sup> And the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your hand with your staff over the rivers, over the canals and over the pools, and make frogs 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> But the magicians did the same by their secret arts and made frogs come up on the land of Egypt.*

*<sup>8</sup> Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and said, "Plead with the LORD to take away the frogs from me and from my people, and I will let the people go to sacrifice to the LORD." <sup>9</sup> Moses said to Pharaoh, "Be pleased to command me when I am to plead for you and for your servants and for your people, that the frogs be cut off from you and your houses and be left only in the Nile." <sup>10</sup> And he said, "Tomorrow." Moses said, "Be it as you say, so that you may know that there is no one like the LORD our God. <sup>11</sup> The frogs shall go away from you and your houses and your servants and your people. They shall be left only in the Nile." <sup>12</sup> So Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh, and Moses cried to the LORD about the frogs, as he had agreed with Pharaoh. <sup>13</sup> And the LORD did according to the word of Moses. The frogs died out in the houses, the courtyards, and the fields. <sup>14</sup> And they gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank. <sup>15</sup> But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart and would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.*

*<sup>16</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the earth, so that it may become gnats in all the land of Egypt.'" <sup>17</sup> And they did so. 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 in all the land of Egypt. <sup>18</sup> The magicians tried by their secret arts to produce gnats, but they could not. So there were gnats on man and beast. <sup>19</sup> Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.*

*(Pastor Prays)*

To believe in God and to belong to God are not the same thing. You can believe in God and not belong to God. To be a member of this church does not equate to being a Christian. There is a faith. We're looking at Pharaoh today. There is a faith in God that is not a saving faith. The book of James says that even the Devils in hell believe in God and shudder. And for a brief moment, when you read this passage in this text, the most powerful man in the world, Pharaoh, believes and shudders. And maybe in this church today, there are some of you here who believe in God, but you have not yet yielded to the Lordship of Christ. And in this text, we find Pharaoh and maybe many in this room that can believe in God and still go to hell. So what I hope this morning is to take this passage with these two plagues and Pharaoh in the middle and just gently remind you that...

### **You Can Believe in God and Still Not Actually Belong to God**

Let's walk back through the passage; it's sort of long. Let me walk through it and point out a couple of things. You follow along in your copy of God's word. I'll point out a couple of truths there, and then we'll come back and make the application. Join me there in verse one. Then the Lord said to Moses. This is what God has been doing: sending Moses to Pharaoh. He had sent him to the Nile River to stand on the banks. Now, God sends him into the house of Pharaoh. Pharaoh had been able to look at the plague in the Nile River. It ran with blood. He would have someone dig him some water and bring it to him. He was not affected. This next one is going to affect him personally. **8** *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, "Let my people go, that they may serve me. That is to worship me. It's the same thing he's been saying all along. The Lord is always consistent. His word is always true. So he puts before Pharaoh, this is what you're supposed to do. Do this. <sup>2</sup> But if you refuse to let them go, behold, I will plague all your country with frogs.* Here are the consequences in verse two. I am going to plague you. That is a strike. It means to hit. I am going to strike you and your country with frogs.

Now, that's got to be the lamest plague in the world. Frogs. Frogs are not deadly. Gnats are not deadly. The next one after that, flies are not deadly. What is God doing? If you take the 1st 11 verses, you'll find 11 times there is the word frogs; it is onomatopoeia. That means it sounds like what it is. Said in Hebrew, it would be croakers. They're coming, and they're going to invade in such a way that it's not going to hurt Pharaoh, but it's going to mess with his mind. In fact, look at the graphic description in verse three. Look at how bad it's going to be. <sup>3</sup> *The Nile shall swarm with frogs that shall come up into your house and into your bedroom and on your bed and into the houses of your servants and your people, and into your ovens and your kneading bowls.* All of you doing homeschool, and making sourdough bread, frogs are in your kneading bowls. They're gonna be on you and on your people. God is going to carpet-bomb Pharaoh with frogs. And it's not just the frogs that are in the Nile that are coming up; there's going to be a superabundance of frogs. They're going to be in your bedroom, and when you put your head down on your pillow at night, there's going to be one in your pillowcase. And you're going to feel it squirming around. You're going to kick down there where the covers are underneath, and you're going to actually hit a frog and probably kill it, and you will have frog guts between your toes. You'll roll over in your bed, and you will feel a warm spot where a giant bullfrog had been lying on it. You squished it, and now you're covered in frog guts. You have frogs everywhere. When you put your foot into your shoe, you're going to kill a little tree frog that's hiding down in there. They're going to be frogs everywhere. And evidently, Moses and Aaron actually did what God told them to do in verses four through five.

<sup>4</sup> *The frogs shall come up on you and on your people and on all your servants.* <sup>5</sup> *And the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your hand with your staff over the rivers, over the canals and over the pools, and make frogs come up on the land of Egypt!'"* That happened. <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.* Here is God sending something personal and intimate.

Beforehand, when the river Nile ran with blood, the Pharaoh could stand back and not really be affected. Now God is coming into his bedroom as if to say, you can't hide from me. But in verse seven, those satanically empowered magicians did the same thing. They're no good. They're just causing more trouble. It's more frogs.

In verse eight, it is so bad that for the first time in the whole passage, we've met Pharaoh; we've been dealing with him for several chapters, but here, for the first time, the most

powerful man in the world cracks. <sup>8</sup> Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and said, “Plead with the LORD to take away the frogs from me and from my people, and I will let the people go to sacrifice to the LORD.” Ask God to get these frogs out of here, and I'll let everybody go. I will do anything.

You know, people will say anything to get themselves out of trouble. God, if you get me out of this, I promise to never speed again. Then there you are on I85, and the next time you get a chance, you just escalate it up. The things that we have said to the Lord are a quid pro quo. You do this for me, and I'll do this for you. So, Pharaoh said, ask God to get these frogs out of here, and I'll let the people go. This is really where I want you to see the idea of disingenuous repentance. Here is a fake conversion. Here is fake repentance. Here is praying a sinner's prayer and then having no fruit in your life. Here's you. You came to church, and you actually were baptized at some point, and yet there's nothing to show. I mean, as soon as he knows the story, as soon as it gets better for him, as soon as he gets a little breathing room, Pharaoh goes right back to his word.

Do you know what this is? This is foxhole religion. This is crocodile tears. You know, crocodile tears. Crocodile tears are not big tears. The legend is that crocodiles would shed a tear before they attacked their prey. It is the idea of not being sympathetic. You know the difference between somebody being sorry and someone who is sorry they are caught. There's a difference. Pharaoh is sorry for all of these frogs. If you'll get rid of them, I'll let you go. And once they start leaving, we're going to see a change.

<sup>9</sup> Moses said to Pharaoh, “Be pleased to command me when I am to plead for you and for your servants and for your people, that the frogs be cut off from you and your houses and be left only in the Nile.” <sup>10</sup> And he said, “Tomorrow.” Moses said, “Be it as you say, so that you may know that there is no one like the LORD our God. ASAP, make this happen as soon as possible. And then you need to circle verse ten. This is why all of this is going down. Why? so that you may know that there is no one like the LORD our God. <sup>11</sup> The frogs shall go away from you and your houses and your servants and your people. They shall be left only in the Nile.” <sup>12</sup> So Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh, and Moses cried to the LORD about the frogs, as he had agreed with Pharaoh. <sup>13</sup> And the LORD did according to the word of Moses. The frogs died out in the houses, the courtyards, and the fields. Get these dead frogs out of here.

Honestly, verse fourteen sounds like a firsthand account. <sup>14</sup> *And they gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank.* Now they're decomposing. The Egyptian sons are beating down on these mounds of frogs, and they're stinking the high heaven. But they're gone. And verse fifteen says, <sup>15</sup> *But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart and would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.*

So now there is a second plague. There's no warning. God just says, <sup>16</sup> *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the earth, so that it may become gnats in all the land of Egypt.'"* The King James version has it as lice. So, gnats fly around you, but they just bug you from being in your presence. Or mosquitoes are landing on you and penetrating your skin and sucking your blood. So, it's probably lice or mosquitoes.

<sup>17</sup> *And they did so. 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 in all the land of Egypt.* So, you can imagine that those lice are crawling all into your head and into your ears. It's driving you crazy. They are up in your nose, or if it's mosquitoes, you breathe them in, and they get all up into your throat. It's terrible.

Now this time, <sup>18</sup> *The magicians tried by their secret arts to produce gnats, but they could not. So there were gnats on man and beast.* <sup>19</sup> *Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God."* But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said. They go to Pharaoh and say, Look, this is the finger of God. But Pharaoh's heart, man, doesn't have a hard heart. Pharaoh's heart was hardened. He wouldn't listen to them, just as the Lord had said.

So, Pharaoh had theology lessons. There were several things that he was taught by God, and yet his heart was hard. I'd like to take those lessons learned in these two plagues, present them to you, and ask you to yield your heart to the Lord. Let's start with an easy lesson. Here's the first one.

### **God is the creator**

God created us. Let me show you where I get that. It's in verse 3; it's the language of creation. What does the text say? The Nile shall swarm. See the word swarm. The Nile shall team with frogs. It is the exact same word used by God in Genesis 1: when he filled the heavens with birds

and the sea with fish, they would swarm. There's another word, come down the page to verse 16, to the second plague. God turns dust into gnats. Do you see that down in verse 16? See the word dust. The psalmist, who writes the prayer book for us, tells us that God knows our frame. He remembers that you are dust. It's a reminder of God's goodness and the gospel that God created us out of dust in his image. The image of God in you is so marred by your sin that you are now an offense to God because you are a sinner and under the condemnation of his judgment. And the gospel promise is that although he knows you are dust and a sinner, he has sent his son, Jesus, to live perfectly and die on the cross in our place. God raised him from the dead, and if you will turn from your sin today, if you will trust Christ today, you will be saved. Do you repent of your sin? Do you trust Christ lived and died for you? Don't be hard-hearted like Pharaoh. Repent and give your life to Christ. Don't let your repentance be fake. That's a foxhole religion. See God as a creator, sustainer, and savior. There's a lesson there. God is our creator. Let me give you something else. Here's another lesson you might learn from these two plagues.

### **God has a name**

You might remember, if you've been here for a little while, back in Exodus 5. *5 Afterward Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the wilderness.'"* *2 Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD and I will not let Israel go."* Now contrast that with verse 8. *8 Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and said, "Plead with the LORD to take away the frogs from me and from my people, and I will let the people go to sacrifice to the LORD."* Pharaoh knows his name now. Plead with the Lord. I know he's the one true God, that he's not a generic God. Here's what I mean: if you are familiar with Alcoholics Anonymous, It's a good program that's helped a lot of people in the world, maybe some of you, but one quibble I would have with AA is, instead of saying the God of the Bible, they would say everybody needs a higher power. And what we would say is this: God has a name. The God of the Bible has a name, Yahweh. He also has a plan to save through Jesus, whose name means Yahweh saves. There is a clear plan with a clear name centered on Jesus.

Now, some of you here are from different backgrounds, maybe even different denominations. You might know something called the Apostles Creed. The very first phrases of the Apostles

Creed can be very helpful. It goes like this. We believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord. Jesus has a name. It's good for you to know Jesus Christ, who lived perfectly and died. He was raised, and we are saved. I'll give you a third lesson. It is that our God, the God of the Bible...

### **God is just**

We like the idea of justice. That if there is a crime committed, the punishment is applied; that is justice. We understand, when you read the Bible, that God has given us a clear picture of a warning. When you read verse one, God says, here's what I want you to do. **8** *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go in 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 plague all your country with frogs.* If you do not let them go, here are the consequences. The God of the Bible punishes the wicked. He rewards the righteous. The only problem with that is that Romans 3:10 tells us that no one is righteous. And if God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked, if we are not righteous, that means we are wicked. And the gospel promise is that God has not left us there. What has Jesus done for us? The old Puritans used to say it like this: it is something called alien righteousness. Alien righteousness. What that means is that we benefit from the righteousness of another. What does Jesus do? Here is Christianity. Jesus has done two things for you. If you're not a Christian yet, I want you to listen to this. Jesus has done two things for you. The first thing he's done is that, as a man, he has kept all of the laws of God, and he lived a perfect life. That's important for your salvation because you will not get to heaven on your own righteousness. You need his righteousness. But that's not all he's done. He lived perfectly to give you a righteous cloak that you can put on, but you are a sinner. And remember, God is just and must punish sin. He will punish the wicked. Here's what Jesus has done at the cross. At the cross, the Bible says he became a sin. All of what makes you so wicked, Jesus takes on himself and absorbs the wrath of God. He takes the punishment so God can be just, punishing sin, and the justifier is saving you. Jesus has done two things for you. And I'm asking you to put your faith, maybe for the first time, in Jesus. There's a fourth lesson you might learn here.

### **God is all-powerful**

Do you see that? Notice in verse 8, that Pharaoh didn't ask the magicians; he went straight to Moses and Aaron. He said to Moses and Aaron in verse 8, please ask God to take the frogs away. Why did he do that? He's got faith in God. He believes that God could do it. He believes that God is an all-powerful, good God. Isn't it good that from in all of these weird pockets of the Bible, we can read about the plagues and see there is the all-powerful, good God? God has been good enough to let you live long enough to hear the gospel. God has saved you and sustained you, and for some of you, God has brought you back. God has healed you, and God has loved you. That isn't good sometimes, just to know that God loves you. Let me give you another lesson, number five.

### **God answers prayer**

The fifth thing we learned about God is that God answers prayer. Pharaoh asked Moses to plead with God and ask God to do something. Evidently, the magicians are not prayer warriors, so he goes to Moses and says, asks him to take away the frogs. Look at verse 9. Moses doesn't hurry off to the prayer closet. He doesn't fall on his knees on the spot. Moses throws the ball back into Pharaoh's court. It's almost like a dare. Moses says, you tell me when. This is one-upmanship. A lot of you have watched the Western movie, Tombstone. At the end of that movie, there are two characters, one named Doc Holiday and the other named Johnny Ringo. At the end of that movie, Doc Holiday is facing off with Johnny Ringo, and the camera angle keeps getting closer to Doc Holiday's face as he takes one last draw on his cigarette and blows the smoke out. What he says to Johnny Ringo is, say when. This feels like what Moses was saying to the Pharaoh. I'm going to show you how powerful God is; you name the time. You name when you want God to do this. <sup>10</sup> *And he said, "Tomorrow." Moses said, "Be it as you say, so that you may know that there is no one like the LORD our God. <sup>11</sup> The frogs shall go away from you and your houses and your servants and your people. They shall be left only in the Nile."* In verse 12, Moses will pray for Pharaoh. Moses went out from Pharaoh's presence. He wasn't with his people. He could pray with his people. He walks out of the enemy's presence. It's good for us to pray in private for people. Not only that, look at how he intercedes. The text says in verse 12 that he pleaded with God. It's good for us to pray directly, to pray clearly, and to pray with specific, answerable requests. We ask for specific things. If you know someone who is living in sin, we're asking that God would break his heart so that he might see his sin and repent. If you know someone that's having trouble health-wise, you pray for healing. You pray



for mended bones. You pray for someone who is struggling with deep anxiety. We ask that God would give them something very specific, a peace that surpasses understanding. We pray for calm. We pray that God will give strength to the weak. Here's another lesson, number six.

### **God is incomparable**

There's nothing to compare with our God. What does verse 10 say? Moses tells Pharaoh, this is happening so that you will find out that there's nobody like our God. Some people think that the frogs were a strike against the Egyptian goddess, who had the body of a woman in the head of a frog. And that doesn't sound like much of a goddess to me. But I'm not sure that is what this is about. I think this is teaching Pharaoh that there is nobody like the God of the Bible. Let's look at a seventh lesson.

### **God is knowable**

Pharaoh said, tomorrow, Moses said, be it as you say so that you might know there is no one like the Lord our God. God uses general revelation. When you look around, you see that there is a creator. That general revelation takes us to a specific revelation. That creator has requirements that have been met in Jesus. The Bible takes us to Jesus. His life, death, and resurrection reveal to us how you might know him. Our God is knowable. There's another lesson you learn; here is the eighth one.

### **God is personal**

Moses tells Pharaoh, so that you might know there is no one like Yahweh, our God. Yahweh is his name. That takes us to the New Testament. The name Jesus means Yahweh saves. There's no one like Yahweh, our God; it's the personal name of our God. And notice that Moses didn't say, my God. Moses said it's our God. There is a congregation of people that our God has saved. Our God has made us so that he can be personally known and experienced in fellowship. The congregation reminds you that you are not alone. He has chosen you and redeemed you in Christ. It's the gospel that our God has a people. There is a ninth lesson to learn from the plagues. This is the lamest point I've ever made in a sermon. I wish I had said it differently, but here it is: number nine.

### **God does things**

God does things. Our brilliant God does things. Here's what I mean. When Moses and Aaron prayed in verses 10-14. God just did things; he made the frogs die up in heaps. God moved. He did what Moses asked him to do. And then look, look at verse 15. Look how Pharaoh responds in verse 15. <sup>15</sup> *But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart and would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.* He got respite and a little breathing room, and he hardened his heart, but he would not listen. That brings me to my last point from the gnats, number ten.

### **God restrains evil**

So, the plague of the lice and the mosquitoes descend on the people in verses 16- 17, and then in verse 18, notice that the Magicians couldn't duplicate. God has told them, okay, what you're doing now is over. You can do it for only so long. Here's where you stop. The magicians tried to duplicate God. God can be imitated. He just can't be equaled. That's what Satan does; he imitates God, and he just can't equal God. God stopped the magicians in their tracks, so even the magicians say this is the finger of God. And yet Pharaoh's heart stayed hard.

So, I think of what's happening here in the Old Testament, and it brings to mind what Paul writes in the New Testament. What does Paul say? There will come a day when every knee will bow in heaven, on Earth, and under the Earth, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Brothers and sisters, learn from the Pharaoh. You can believe that there is a God and still not belong to him.

*(Pastor prays)*