

## Exodus 8

Moses gave Pharaoh God's message at 5:1-2, without any sign to accompany the message. We assume that Moses had also warned Pharaoh that God would kill his firstborn, if he did not release God's "firstborn," in accordance with God's instructions at 4:22-23. Pharaoh does not know when God will fulfill that specific promise. Pharaoh refused to obey God, just as God had predicted (3:19).

Moses appeared to Pharaoh a second time at 7:8-13 and performed a sign. Aaron turned his staff into a snake which then consumed the magicians' snakes. Pharaoh refused to obey, just as God had predicted (3:19).

Then God begins the plagues. First, He turned the water of the Nile into blood (7:14-25). This act attacked the center of the Egyptian economy. Pharaoh chose to believe his magicians and their efforts (7:22), and refused to obey, just as God predicted (3:19).

This chapter will record the second plague of frogs (8:1-15), the third plague of gnats (8:16-19), and the fourth plague of flies (8:20-32). Each time, Pharaoh will harden his heart and refuse to obey God, just as God had predicted (3:19). Pharaoh still does not know when the death of his firstborn will happen. Remember also that God never told Moses how many times He would strike Egypt before Pharaoh would send out the Israelites.

There is a divergence in the text between the Hebrew Bible and divisions in modern translations. Chapter 7:26-29 are in the Hebrew Bible but are 8:1-4 in modern Bibles. The Hebrew verses will be given in brackets: [7:26].

### TRANSLATION - 8:1-4 [7:26-29]:

**1 [7:26]** Then Jehovah said to Moses, "Come to Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says Jehovah, 'Send out My people, and they will serve Me. **2 [7:27]** And if you are refusing to send away, behold I am striking all your borders with frogs. **3 [7:28]** And the Nile will swarm with frogs and they will go up and they will come in your houses and in the room of your bed and on your bed and in the house of your servants and among your people and in your ovens and in your kneading bowls. **4 [7:29]** And on you, and on your people, and on all your servants the frogs will go up.'"

### HEBREW WORDS:

"To refuse" (ver. 27) is used 41 times in the OT; in Exodus at 4:23; 7:14; 8:2; 9:2; 10:3-4; 16:28; 22:17. "To strike" is used here and 12:23, 27; 21:22, 35; 32:35 in Exodus. It is used 49 times in the OT. "Borders" is used 251 times in the OT, primarily in Numbers (29 times) and Joshua (84 times). It is used in Exodus at 8:2; 10:4, 14, 19; 13:7; 23:31; 34:24. "Frogs" is used 13 times in the OT, all but two are in this text, between 8:2 and 8:9. The other two are Psalm 78:45 and 105:30. "To swarm" (ver. 28) was seen at 1:7 relative to the nation of Israel as they grew in the land of Egypt. "Room" refers to a bedroom. It is used 38 times in the OT; this is its only use in Exodus. We translate it simply as "room" because the word "bed" is used immediately afterward. It is used 46 times; in Exodus here and at 21:18. The second word for "bed" is synonymous, but a different word. This is its only use in Exodus, out of 29 times. The oven was seen at Genesis 15:17. It is used 15 times in the OT; only here in Exodus. The "kneading bowl" is used here; 12:34; Deut. 28:5, 17.

### HEBREW GRAMMAR:

"Refusing" and "striking" (ver. 2) are present tense participles in Hebrew, showing Pharaoh's continuous refusal to obey and God's continuous intention to strike was fulfilled as He spoke.

### COMMENTARY:

The plagues are the battlefields between Jehovah God and the gods of the Egyptians (12:12; Num. 33:4). The goddess Heqet was portrayed as a frog and was the goddess of

fertility and the goddess of childbirth. It was during the incident with the midwives in chapter 1 that Pharaoh tried to kill the Egyptian boys. In Egyptian mythology, Heqet worked with the god Khnum, associated with the Nile River, to bring humanity into existence. Here, Jehovah God shows that He is in control of the frogs, not a goddess. This is plague #2.

God's original message to Pharaoh, through Moses, was to let Israel leave Egypt to worship God (3:10). Moses was to ask for a journey of three days (3:18). Moses' message, from Jehovah God, to Pharaoh was: "Let my son go" (4:23). Moses repeated that message in front of Pharaoh in his initial meeting at 5:1. God repeated that message to Moses at 6:10 and 7:2, 16. Moses and Aaron did that to Pharaoh at 7:20.

In 8:1, Jehovah again tells Moses to tell Pharaoh, "Send out My people, that they will serve Me." Pharaoh was "refusing to send" (the participle in Hebrew is present tense), so God was "injuring" or "striking" Pharaoh's land with frogs. "Frogs" is mentioned 11 times in this paragraph. The Nile will swarm with them and they will be everywhere. Note how comprehensive their presence will be, based on verses 3-4.

#### APPLICATION:

*Moses' contemporaries* - God's command for Pharaoh to let His people go is repeated from 5:1; 7:16 but also found in 8:1, 20; 9:1, 13; 10:3. God's command did not change despite Pharaoh's disobedience.

*Later Jewish writers* - Psalms 78 and 105 review the plagues on Egypt.

#### TRANSLATION - 8:5-11:

**5 [8:1]** And Jehovah said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, Stretch out your hand with your staff against the rivers, against the canals and against pools and bring up frogs against the land of Egypt. **6 [8:2]** So Aaron stretched out his hand against the waters of Egypt and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. **7 [8:3]** And the soothsayers did thus by their magic and they brought up frogs against the land of Egypt. **8 [8:4]** And Pharaoh called to Moses and to Aaron and said, "Plead to Jehovah that He will take away the frogs from me and from my people and I will send out the people and they will sacrifice to Jehovah."

**9 [8:5]** And Moses said to Pharaoh, "Let the honor be yours when I will plead for you and for your servants and for your people to cut off the frogs from you and from your house; only in the Nile they will remain." **10 [8:6]** And he said, "Tomorrow." And he said, "As your word, so that you will know that there is none like Jehovah our God. **11 [8:7]** Then the frogs will leave from you and from your house and from your servants and from your people; only in the Nile they will remain."

#### HEBREW WORDS:

"To stretch out" (ver. 5) was earlier used at 7:5, 19. "Frogs" is used in the OT almost entirely in this context; it is used also at Psalm 78:45 and Psalm 105:30, the two psalms which repeat the plagues. "To cover" (ver. 6) was used relative to the covering on Noah's ark at Genesis 7:19-20. It is used 153 times in the OT; in Exodus, 15 times. On "soothsayers" (ver. 7), see comments at 7:11. On "magic," see comments at 7:11. "To plead" (ver. 8) is used 20 times in the OT; it can mean to "pray or entreat." It was used at Genesis 25:21; in Exodus, it is used in this context: 8:8, 9, 28-30; 9:28; 10:17-18. "To take away" is used 298 times; it can mean to "turn aside" or "leave." It was used earlier at 3:3-4. "To sacrifice" was used earlier at 3:18.

"Let the honor be" (ver. 9) means to "glorify, exalt, boast." It is used 13 times in the OT; this is its only reference in Exodus. The form of the verb (*hithpa'el*) suggests Pharaoh allowing something to be done for him. The verb "to cut" is often used in establishing a covenant. It was used earlier at 4:25. "Tomorrow" (ver. 10) is used 52 times; in Exodus, 11 times. The verb "to know," one of the key words in Exodus, was used earlier at 1:8.

#### COMMENTARY:

Now begins the explicit instructions God will give to Moses and Aaron. God spoke to Moses, who was to speak to Aaron (see 7:1-2). Aaron was to stretch out his hand with his staff against the rivers, canals, and pools, just as he had done in the previous plague (7:19-20). Aaron did as God commanded, and things happened as God predicted (8:6). Just as the Egyptian soothsayers had done in the first plague (7:22), so they imitate Aaron's miracle, also producing frogs. Why they would increase the misery of having more frogs, we do not know!

Yet, the incident did have an impact on Pharaoh's heart. In verse 8, Pharaoh actually asked Moses and Aaron to "plead" to Jehovah. Pharaoh uses God's specific name, Jehovah. Pharaoh had said he did not know Jehovah, so he did not have to obey His voice (5:2). Now he acknowledges Jehovah's existence and power. It is significant for Pharaoh to acknowledge God is the source of this plague; however, the knowledge does not impact his heart. He wants Moses and Aaron to plead with Jehovah to take away the frogs from him and his people. Then, he states he will send out the people, Israel, so they could sacrifice to Jehovah (8:8).

Moses graciously gives Pharaoh the right and privilege to decide when the frogs will be taken away. This is surely to impress on Pharaoh's mind and heart that God is completely in control. "Let the honor be yours," Moses tells Pharaoh. When he decides, God will respond and the frogs will be "cut off" from the land; they will remain in the Nile. Why Pharaoh chose to procrastinate and say, "Tomorrow," we do not know. Perhaps it reflects skepticism on Pharaoh's part; perhaps he did not think so many frogs could be removed so quickly. But, Moses acquiesced and stated that it would be done according to Pharaoh's word "so that you will know that there is none like Jehovah our God" (ver. 10). This series of plagues was performed partly for Pharaoh and Egypt to know who Jehovah God is. If Pharaoh had obeyed Jehovah God, he would have been "honored" by Jehovah God. But Pharaoh wanted to honor himself.

#### APPLICATION:

*Moses' contemporaries* - Israel needed to learn the very important lesson that there was no god like Jehovah God (Deut. 33:26).

*Later Jewish writers* - The psalmist will also emphasize the unique nature of Jehovah God (Psa. 86:8), as will Hannah (1 Sam. 2:2) and King David (2 Sam. 7:22).

*NT writers* - King Agrippa also procrastinated his obedience to Jesus Christ (Acts 26:28), but as far as the record is concerned, Agrippa never obeyed the gospel. Procrastination is a dangerous attitude to have relative to God's commands (Matt. 8:18-22). Jesus teaches His disciples to pray for their enemies (Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:28) as He, in fact, practiced: Luke 23:34. Jesus will also warn against half-hearted commitment which does not follow through to its completion: Matthew 8:18-27; Luke 14:25-33.

#### TRANSLATION - 8:12-15:

**12 [8:8]** And Moses went up and Aaron from with Pharaoh and Moses cried to Jehovah on the word that the frogs which He put before Pharaoh. **13 [8:9]** And Jehovah did according to the word of Moses and the frogs died from the houses and from the courtyards and from the fields. **14 [8:10]** And they gathered them heaps on heaps and the land stank.

**15 [8:11]** And Pharaoh saw that there was relief and he hardened his heart and did not listen to them just as Jehovah had spoken.

#### HEBREW WORDS:

"To cry" (ver. 12) was seen earlier at 5:8. "Heaps" (ver. 14) is repeated twice in the verse, for emphasis. This is a translation of the word "omer," which was the largest measurement used by the Hebrews. "To stink" was seen earlier at 5:21; 7:18, 21. The word "relief" (ver. 15) is only used here and in Lamentations 3:56.

#### COMMENTARY:

We have the fulfillment of Moses' promise to Pharaoh; will Pharaoh keep his promise (8:8)? Moses and Aaron leave Pharaoh's presence and they cry, in prayer, to Jehovah God to remove the frogs as Pharaoh desired. Jehovah God responded to the prayer of Moses and the frogs died from all the places where they were in Egypt. There were so many frogs, they were "heaped on heaps". And the land stank; an ironic contrast with the Israelites feeling like they stank in the eyes of Pharaoh (5:21).

Yet when things went well for Pharaoh, when he saw there was "relief" (8:15), he hardened his heart and refused to listen to and obey Jehovah God, just as God had predicted (3:18). Pharaoh chose not to keep his promise.

The score is: Jehovah God - 2; gods of Egypt - 0.

#### APPLICATION:

*Later Jewish writers* - There are other occasions when Jehovah God did as someone asked: 1 Sam. 12:18; 1 Kings 18:42-45; Amos 7:1-6.

*NT writers* - God does not approve of breaking promises, which is a form of lying. The Bible never portrays *some* lies as acceptable; rather all liars will have their part in the lake of fire, according to Revelation 21:8.

#### TRANSLATION 8:16-19:

**16 [8:12]** And Jehovah said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the land and it will be for gnats in all the land of Egypt."

**17 [8:13]** And they did thus and Aaron stretched out his hand with his staff and struck the dust of the land and there were gnats on man and on animals. All the dust of the land was gnats in all the land of Egypt.

**18 [8:14]** And the soothsayers did thus by their magic to bring up the gnats but they were not able and there were gnats on man and on animal. **19 [8:15]** And the soothsayers said to Pharaoh, "The finger of God this [is]." And Pharaoh's heart hardened and he did not listen to them just as Jehovah had spoken.

#### HEBREW WORDS:

"To strike" or "to hit" (ver. 16) was seen earlier at 2:11-13. "Dust" is found only in this context in Exodus; it is used 110 times in the OT. "Gnats" are found only here and in the psalm which speaks of the plagues; Psalm 105. Therefore, it is difficult to decide which type of insect this is. Some translations use "lice." It does appear to be an insect known for biting. "Animal" (ver. 17) was seen extensively in Genesis 1 and 7. It is transliterated as *behemoth*. The noun is found 190 times in the OT, 18 times in Exodus. "Finger" (ver. 19) is used 31 times in the OT; it can also be translated "toe." It is used in Exodus only here (8:19), 29:12; 31:18.

#### COMMENTARY:

The plagues are the battlefields between Jehovah God and the gods of the Egyptians (12:12; Num. 33:4). This is plague #3. While we do not know for sure if God intends to strike specific gods through these plagues, this plague might be directed against the god Geb. Dry ground (represented by the dust), or earth represented Geb who, along with Nut (the sky), gave birth to Osiris.

Once again, Aaron is to stretch out his staff (see 7:19; 8:5). This time, rather than striking the waters of Egypt or the Nile, he is to strike the dirt or dust of the land. This dust will then turn into some type of biting insect; guesses range from gnats, lice, mosquitoes, or flies. In verse 17, Moses and Aaron did as God commanded them and the dust became gnats on man and on the animals. In fact, Moses is comprehensive in verse 17: "All the dust of the land was gnats in all the land of Egypt." This comprehensive nature will also set a contrast with the following plague in which a distinction is made (8:23).

Pharaoh's magicians tried to imitate Aaron's miracle (8:18), as they had done previously (7:22; 8:7), but this time they failed. The magicians of Pharaoh will only be mentioned once

more, in 9:11, where the boils strike Pharaoh's magicians themselves. Not only could the magicians not imitate Aaron's miracle, but Moses repeats that the gnats were on man and animal. Thus, the magicians recognize the "finger of God" in this miracle. God had earlier said that He would "raise His hand" against Egypt (3:19; 6:1). Here the magicians recognize the "finger of God." While it is true that "God" is the generic word and could be understood as "gods," so that the magicians are simply recognizing some divine activity, it is more likely they are acknowledging this act as the work of the "God of Israel, the God of the Hebrews" (5:1, 3). Pharaoh has acknowledged Jehovah by name at 8:8. The magicians acknowledge God's power here as well.

But notwithstanding the acknowledgment, Pharaoh hardened his heart once again and did not listen to Jehovah God, as He had predicted (3:19).

Nevertheless, the score is: Jehovah God - 3; gods of Egypt - 0.

#### APPLICATION:

*Moses' contemporaries* - The expression "finger of God" is used only three times: Exodus 8:19; 31:18 and Deut. 9:10, where God wrote the Ten Commandments with His finger. Of course, references to God's body parts are an example of the figurative speech called anthropomorphism, giving God human forms. It helps man picture God's works and actions.

*Later Jewish writers* - Daniel, the prophet, is called into the presence of King Belshazzar (Dan. 5) because there was a hand which appeared, writing on the wall (Dan. 5:5). While it is not explicitly said, the implication of the text is that the fingers are God's fingers. In Psalm 8:3, David recognizes that the works of heaven are the works of God's fingers.

*NT writers* - In Luke 11:20, Jesus likely alludes to this passage by stating that if He cast out demons by the finger of God, then the Jews should know that the kingdom of God was soon to be established. By making that statement, Jesus made Himself equal to Jehovah God. Jesus will have John use frogs as a symbol of the destructive forces of the Roman Empire in Revelation 16:13-14.

#### TRANSLATION - 8:20-23:

**20 [8:16]** And Jehovah said to Moses, "Arise early in the morning and stand in the presence of the face of Pharaoh, behold he is going out to the water, and say to him, 'Thus says Jehovah, 'Send out My people, that they may serve Me.' **21 [8:17]** If you are not sending out My people, behold I am sending against you and against your servants and against your people and against your houses swarms and the houses of Egypt will be full of swarms and even the land which they are on it. **22 [8:18]** And I will bring a separation in that day between the land of Goshen where My people are staying on it so there will not be there swarms so that you will know that I [am] Jehovah in the midst of Egypt. **23 [8:19]** And I will put redemption between My people and your people. Tomorrow will be this sign."

#### HEBREW WORDS:

"To arise early" (ver. 20) is all one word in Hebrew; it is used at 8:20; 9:13; 24:4; 32:6; 34:4. In the OT, it is used 65 times. "To serve" is one of the key verbs in Exodus; it was used earlier at 1:13-14. This word for "swarm" (ver. 21) is used in this context, Psalm 78:45 and Psalm 105:31, for a total of nine uses. "To separate" or "to bring a separation" (ver. 22) is used only 5 times: Exo. 8:22; 9:4 11:7; 33:16; Psalms 4:4. "Redemption" (ver. 23) is used only four times in the OT; here; Isa. 50:2; Psalm 111:9; 130:7. "Sign" was used earlier at 3:12; 4:8-9.

#### HEBREW GRAMMAR:

The words "sending" in verse 21 are both present tense participles in Hebrew, suggesting both Pharaoh's continued refusal to "send" and God's determined effort to "send" a new plague.

#### REFERENCES AND ALLUSIONS TO GENESIS:

Moses informs us that the work of the Hebrews was loathsome to the Egyptians in Genesis 43:32; 46:34. "Goshen" was the land where Israel moved to live, in Egypt, under the leadership of Joseph (Gen. 45:10; 46:28-29, 34; 47:1, 4, 6, 27; 50:8). It will be mentioned only twice more; in Exodus 8:22 and 9:26. While scholars do not know exactly where it was located, it was somewhere on the eastern side of the Nile delta area.

#### COMMENTARY:

The plagues are the battlefields between Jehovah God and the gods of the Egyptians (12:12; Num. 33:4). This is plague #4. The word translated "swarm" is often translated "swarm of flies" and could be any number of different insects. Some scholars suggest it is swarms of the flying beetle or scarab, since it symbolizes the god of resurrection, Kheperer.

In this plague, Jehovah tells Moses again to get up early and stand in the presence of Pharaoh (cf. 7:15), as he is going to the water, perhaps to bathe, perhaps to worship. Moses is to give Pharaoh the unchanging message: "Send out My people that they may serve Me." God's message has not changed even in the face of Pharaoh's stubborn refusal to obey. If Pharaoh is "not sending" out God's people, God will "send" flies (ver. 21). Again, observe how widespread the fly infestation will be from verse 21 and from the sentence "the houses of Egypt will be full of flies and even the land on which they are on."

In contrast to the previous plagues, in this plague, God will "bring a separation" between the area where Israel lived, Goshen, and the land of Egypt. There would be no flies in the land of Goshen. This will be done (ver. 22) so that Pharaoh and Egypt would know that "I [am] Jehovah in the midst of Egypt." Not only was Jehovah the God of Abraham in Ur of Chaldea in Mesopotamia and not only was Jehovah the God of Isaac and Jacob in Canaan. He is also Jehovah, the God of Israel, the God of the Hebrews, in the middle of Egypt! In the middle of the pantheon of gods in the Egyptians' temples, Jehovah God stands as the conqueror and controller of all that happens in Egypt. That statement almost sounds as if Jehovah God Himself had invaded Egypt! Additionally, God will put "redemption" between His people and the people of Egypt. Jehovah would "redeem" His people who had been slaves to Egypt; the price of the redemption for their slavery would be the wellness, the happiness, the peace of mind, and eventually the firstborn of the Egyptian people.

Just as Pharaoh had asked for the frogs to be removed "tomorrow" (8:10), so Jehovah warned Pharaoh that He would bring about the swarm of flies "tomorrow" (8:23). This would be a "sign" that Jehovah God was sovereign, supreme, and in total control of all that would happen. We wonder if Pharaoh was still wondering when the death of the firstborn would happen (4:22-23).

#### APPLICATION:

*Moses' contemporaries* - God will make a distinction between Israel and Egypt in subsequent plagues: 9:4, 6, 11, 26; 10:6, 23; 11:7. He will also make a distinction through the use of a pillar of clouds in 14:19-31. God identified as "in the midst of Egypt" (ver. 22) is mentioned again in 9:14, 29. The Israelites should have known that if Jehovah God can be with them in the middle of Egypt (8:22), then He can be with them anywhere. Moses will tell Israel that God saved them out of His grace, not because of their righteousness (Deut. 7:7-9; 10:14-15).

*NT writers* - Jesus insists that He will know His own when Jerusalem is destroyed (Matt. 24:31). Paul writes that God will not deny His own; He knows those who are his (2 Tim. 2:19). In the book of Revelation, when Christians are threatened by the Roman Empire, John writes that God's people have a mark on their foreheads (Rev. 7:3; 9:4; 14:1; 22:4), a metaphor for the idea that God knows those who are His. God still makes a distinction. Jesus says God's word cannot be broken (John 10:35). God's word will say the same thing when it is presented before mankind on the day of judgment as it says to us today. His commandments will not change.

When Jesus casts out demons, He illustrates that He can "invade" the territory of Satan, showing that He has more power than Satan (Matt. 12:29).

#### TRANSLATION - 8:24-32:

**24 [8:20]** And Jehovah did thus and there came a heavy swarm toward the house of Pharaoh and the house of his servants and in all the land of Egypt. The land was destroyed from the face of the swarm. **25 [8:21]** And Pharaoh called to Moses and to Aaron and said, "Go, sacrifice to your God in the land."

**26 [8:22]** And Moses said, "It is not possible to do this because an abomination for the Egyptians for us to sacrifice to Jehovah our God. Thus we will sacrifice an abomination to the Egyptians to their eyes and they will stone us." **27 [8:23]** A path of three days we will walk in the wilderness and we will sacrifice to Jehovah our God just as He said to us."

**28 [8:24]** And Pharaoh said, "I [myself] will send you all and you will sacrifice to Jehovah your God in the wilderness. Only to go far away, you will not go far away to go - Plead for me!"

**29 [8:25]** And Moses said, "Behold I [myself] am going out from you and I will plead to Jehovah and He will take away the swarm from Pharaoh and from his servants and from his people - tomorrow. Only do not add Pharaoh to mock, to not send out the people to sacrifice to Jehovah." **30 [8:26]** And Moses went up from Pharaoh and he pled to Jehovah.

**31 [8:27]** And Jehovah did according to the word of Moses and He took away the swarm from Pharaoh and from his servants and from his people. There did not remain one. **32 [8:28]** And Pharaoh hardened his heart even this time and he did not send out the people.

#### HEBREW WORDS:

"To destroy" (ver. 24) was used extensively in Genesis 6. It is only used in Exodus three times: 8:24; 21:26; 32:7, out of 152 times. The word "abomination" (ver. 26) was used of the Egyptians' view of cattle ranchers in Genesis 43:32; 46:34. The word is only used here in Exodus. It is used 118 times and it will eventually refer to idols as an "abomination" in the eyes of God. "To stone" is used at Exodus 8:26; 17:4; 19:13; 21:28-29, 32. It is used 22 times in the OT. "To go far away" (ver. 28) is used in Exodus at 8:28; 23:7; 33:7. The word is used 59 times. "To mock" (ver. 29) is used ten times in the OT; only here in Exodus. It was used at Gen. 31:7.

#### HEBREW GRAMMAR:

The expression "It is not possible" (ver. 26) is emphatic in the Hebrew language. The expression "to go far away, you will not go far away" (ver. 28) translates an emphatic expression in Hebrew, the infinitive absolute followed by the same verb in an imperfect tense. When Pharaoh uses the first person pronoun in verse 26, he is trying to emphasize his sovereign power to release the Israelites.

#### ARCHAEOLOGY:

The bull was worshipped by the Egyptians as a representation of the god Apis; Hathor was the goddess of love, worshipped under the image of a cow. This might be the reason Moses thought the Hebrews' sacrifices might cause problems with the Egyptians (ver. 26).

#### COMMENTARY:

Just as Jehovah had predicted, so He did (8:24). A "heavy swarm [of flies?]" infiltrated the land of Egypt. They entered the house of Pharaoh himself, the servants, and all the land of Egypt. Whatever the flies could destroy, they did. Having been humbled a very small bit, Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and gave them permission to sacrifice to God *in the land of Egypt* (8:25).

Moses objects to Pharaoh's compromise (8:26) stating that their worship, perhaps their sacrifice of cattle or sheep, would be an abomination before the eyes of the Egyptians. The end result of that behavior would be that the Egyptians would stone the Israelites. Scholars do not know why the Egyptians would find the sacrifice abominable, unless it would have to do with the slaughter of cattle, whom the Egyptians worshipped. To repeat what God had earlier

commanded (3:18; 5:3), Moses states they must travel three days (8:27). This was to be done “just as He said to us.” Moses would not compromise on the commands of Jehovah God.

Pharaoh capitulates to a very small degree. He states he “himself” will send them out so they can sacrifice to Jehovah God, but only if they do not go very far away. Perhaps Pharaoh yields to the request for the three days travel (8:28). He concludes with another request for Moses to “plead” with Jehovah God for him, to take away the flies.

To meet Pharaoh’s requirements, Moses agrees to leave his presence and plead to Jehovah God on his behalf, to take away the flies from Pharaoh and the people, “tomorrow” (God’s time schedule). But Moses emphasizes (8:29) that Pharaoh should not mock God and change his mind and refuse to send out the people to sacrifice to Jehovah. In verse 30, Moses pleads to Jehovah God. In verse 31, Moses informs us that Jehovah God did just as Moses prayed, on behalf of Pharaoh, and He took away the flies. Moses emphasizes there was not one single fly left.

Yet again, Pharaoh hardened his heart and refused to send out the Israelites. Jehovah God kept His word. Moses kept his word. Pharaoh refused to keep his word.

The score: Jehovah God - 4; gods of Egypt - 0.

#### APPLICATION:

*NT writers* - God will not be mocked; whatever a person sows (including a life of deception), he will reap: Galatians 6:7.