

Avoiding Another Night with the Frogs
Great Tribulations – The Plagues of Egypt #2
Exodus 8:1-15

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction. But whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

My mother is the queen of Thank You Cards. If, on this great Mother's Day, I decided to take the time to write Thank You Cards to those nations and/or people groups who have made my personal life better in some way, I would develop carpal tunnel in my writing hand quickly. My first card would undoubtedly go to the Sumerians. These cats got tired of lugging the Brussel Sprouts their mother made them fetch through the desert sands of Mesopotamia. So, they came up with the idea to fashion pieces of hardwood into circles and axles. Because of their invention, now we can sing: "the wheels on the Brussel Sprout bus go round and round. All through the town." But there is one spot on the map I will never send a Thank You Card. For the invention fashioned from this parcel of land in the world has caused bookshelves to crash, luggage to be ruined, and floors to have glass shards under the rug all over the planet. That place is Austria. And that particular invention is the Snow Globe. Why someone would want to buy his mother a Snow Globe with the city of Truth or Consequences, New Mexico inside of it for Mother's Day, I do not know. But what I do know from personal experience is that if you buy one and it breaks, you are not going to want to sing "Let it Snow" at Christmas for the rest of your days. You are going to wonder why you had to buy that Snow Globe in the first place.

There are some Great Tribulations that we must go through in life. They are fashioned by our Provident Emancipator to grow us, to make us stronger, and to force us to lean on the Everlasting Arms of Jesus more than we ever have. But church, I want to you this morning, that there are some Great Tribulations that are completely unnecessary and avoidable. God doesn't desire we go through them. They are not part of His original plan. As a matter of fact, they come about specifically because we've put them in our luggage and on our bookshelves after he told us not to buy them in the first place. And when the glass breaks and the snow escapes from the globe, we only have our choices to blame as the reason for the calamity; not the Austrians, or the Lord Our God.

The God of the Bible gets the blame for most things that go wrong in the world and in our lives. And the Plagues of Egypt are no exception. But the truth is not one single solitary plague out of the ten came without a warning and an opportunity to be averted. All ten of them were avoidable. On ten occasions, Moses told Pharaoh to let His people go. And on ten occasions he refused. The glass didn't break and the snow didn't escape because God is cruel. The glass broke and the snow escaped because Pharaoh bought the Snow Globe and put it on his shelf and in his luggage when God warned him not to. And in so doing, he brought about tribulations in his life and in the lives of others that were completely unnecessary and absolutely avoidable. To see that, please turn with me to Exodus 8:1-15 and let's read together the story of the second plague, the Plague of Frogs.

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and say to him, 'This is what the Lord says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me. ² If you refuse to let them go, I will send a plague of frogs on your whole country.³ The Nile will teem with frogs. They will come up into your palace and your bedroom and onto your bed, into the houses of your officials and on your people, and into your ovens and kneading troughs. ⁴ The frogs will come up on you and your people and all your officials.'" ⁵ Then the Lord said to Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'Stretch out your hand with your staff over the streams and canals and ponds, and make frogs come up on the land of Egypt.'" ⁶ So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land. ⁷ But the magicians did the same things by their secret arts; they also made frogs come up on the land of Egypt. ⁸ Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "Pray to the Lord to take the frogs away from me and my people, and I will let your people go to offer sacrifices to the Lord." ⁹ Moses said to Pharaoh, "I leave to you the honor of setting the time for me to pray for you and your officials and your people that you and your houses may be rid of the frogs, except for those that remain in the Nile." ¹⁰ "Tomorrow," Pharaoh said. Moses replied, "It will be as you say, so that you may know there is no one like the Lord our God. ¹¹ The frogs will leave you and your houses, your officials and your people; they will remain only in the Nile." ¹² After Moses and Aaron left Pharaoh, Moses cried out to the Lord about the frogs he had brought on Pharaoh. ¹³ And the Lord did what Moses asked. The frogs died in the houses, in the courtyards and in the fields.¹⁴ They were piled into heaps, and the land reeked of them. ¹⁵ But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the Lord had said.

Four Great Tribulations That Are Absolutely Avoidable:

1. The Tribulation of Sacred Frogs

- **The Gremlins** – (1) My favorite Christmas movie isn't Christmas Story; a Christmas Carol; or a Christmas with Elmo; (2) It's the Gremlins; (3) You've seen the movie, I'm sure; (4) A man is put in charge of a Magwi and told not to let them eat at night and not to give them a bath; (5) But the kid couldn't help himself. He does both and – BAAM – the whole town has a Gremlin problem they can't get rid of.
- **Main Idea of the Point** – We create sacred frogs when we worship what we really value in life. God's way of judging the Egyptians was letting them be consumed by what they valued most.

- **Textual Emphasis** – v3-4 // Nile will team with frogs // Two driving ideas: (1) The plagues have increased in severity now – it's moved from the Nile to the Land; (2) Egypt will be inundated by the frogs they considered sacred.
- **The Egyptian “g”oddess, Heka** – (1) She's often depicted in the form of a woman with a frogs head; (2) They believed her to be one who blew the breath of life into the nostrils of human beings; (3) As a result, the Egyptians couldn't kill the frogs. They considered them sacred; representing life itself; (4) God's judgment here is letting the Egyptians be consumed by the “g”ods they had fashioned in their image.
- **App** – What they thought to be sacred and impart life and meaning turning out to be the exact opposite and lead to a mound of death, literally.

2. The Tribulation of Bringing Forth more Frogs

- **The Fly Paper and the Paper Towel** – (1) Kids, if you ask your parents “what's the worst household item ever invented,” they would tell you “fly paper in a heartbeat. (2) Back in the day, to get rid of flies we used to hang fly paper up on the ceiling. (3) But Lord be with you if you ever touched it. (4) And it never failed that if someone touched it, their instinct was to grab a paper towel to wipe it off. (5) Bad move. Now that person found themselves in a worse predicament than he started with.
- **Main Idea of the Point** – When we try to do what God wants to do for us himself, we usually find ourselves in a worse predicament than we started in. The Egyptian magicians brought forth more frogs but could not remove them. In so doing, they only added to their misery.
- **Textual Emphasis** – v7-8 / The emphasis here is the Egyptians could replicate the miracle but could not remove the frogs. Only the God of Israel could do that. That's why Pharaoh had to appeal to Moses.
- **A Lesson on How God Allows the Devil to Work** – (1) Satan has power on the earth; but it is limited; (2) And he can only do what God will allow him to do; (3) In this case, he worked through the magicians to bring forth more frogs; (4) But even he couldn't remove them.
- **Also A Lesson on How to Make Things Worse** – When we look to something else other than the God of the Bible for help, we only add to the misery and the trauma of the current situation.
- **App** – The surest way to find yourself in a worse predicament than you started in is to try to do for yourself what God is willing to do for you: remove the frogs.

3. The Tribulation of Another Night with the Frogs

- **Hey Google** – (1) My kids are proud owners of a Voice Commanded Blue Tooth Speaker; (2) All they have to do is say “hey google” and her voice comes on and grants their request; (3) Moses was Hey Google to Pharaoh.
- **Main Idea of the Point** – We prefer another night with our sacred frogs to God's removal of them. All Pharaoh had to do was say remove them “now” and Moses would have obliged. But instead, he said “remove them tomorrow.”
- **Textual Emphasis** – v9-10 / Moses let Pharaoh decide when he wanted the frogs to be removed. And he chose “tomorrow,” not “now.”
- **The One More Night With the Frogs Mentality** – (1) Frogs covered the land completely. They were everywhere and they caused death, rot, stink, and everything unhealthy for Pharaoh and his people under the sun; (2) He knew they needed to be removed right now. But he didn't want them removed right now. He wanted them tomorrow. (3) Pharaoh preferred one more night with the frogs, one more night with a plague to the goodness and mercy of God.
- **App** – It is possible in life to voice the need for healing, mercy, and life with the Savior but really prefer the plague in our heart of hearts.

4. The Tribulation of Frog Piles

- **One of My Most Prized Possessions** – (1) Is a composition book from Elementary School my mom gave me a while back; (2) You see, she knew that the greatest form of punishment for me was to sit a table and write for an extended amount of time; (3) The notebook contained one line I had to write a thousand times after she saw a teacher's note on my report card; (4) That line was this: I will chew gum in class; (5) A visual reminder of a tribulation of my own making.
- **Main Idea of the Point** – Stubbornness and hardness of heart leads to piles of Dead Frogs. They are mounds of spiritual death meant to warn you that more pestilence is coming if the stubbornness and hardness of heart continues.
- **Textual Emphasis** – v14 / Frogs were piled in heaps and the land reeked of them / Two important lessons here: (1) It's a visual object lesson for Egypt and Israel – who went through it – of the consequences of stubbornness and hardness of heart. (2) Also a visual representation of the futility of depending of “g”ods that can't save.
- **A Tragedy That Was Preventable** – (1) Not one plague came upon Egypt without warning; (2) But Pharaoh chose to harden his heart and they came. And the pile of frogs in Egypt shows the consequence of that decision.
- **App** – Tribulations that leave mounds of frogs that can come into our lives often come as a direct consequence of our choices, not as divine cruelty. When you see those, don't blame God. Ask him to prevent them from mounting up further from this point forward. Glory be to God.

