

LORD Of The Flies

Long Beach Alliance Church • February 20th, 2011 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**The LORD did as Moses asked, and removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants and from his people; not one remained. But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and he did not let the people go.
~Exodus 8:19 (NASB)**

1) The Beginning Of A Second Cycle Of Plagues

- A) The plagues which God brings against Egypt unfold in three distinguishable cycles (#'s 1-3, 4-6, 7-9) and climax with a 'plague to end plagues' (#10).
- B) Like the first plague (Nile/Blood, Exodus 7:14-25), Moses approaches Pharaoh early in the morning at the Nile River to deliver God's request to "Let My people go..." (8:20).
- C) With this request, God also has Moses deliver a preview of the fourth plague, a suffocating swarm of flies all across Egypt (8:21). The LXX* translates "flies" as being "a bloodsucking horsefly/gadfly."

* LXX stands for the "Septuagint," the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, completed in the 3rd - 2nd Century B.C. The LXX was translated in Alexandria, Egypt and is a trusted source (particularly) for clarifying obscure Hebrew words relating to Egyptian animals and practices. The LXX is the common version of the OT Scriptures which the Jews used during the time of Jesus Christ, and almost all NT references to the OT in Scripture are from the LXX. LXX is the literal Roman number for "70," which is derived from an ancient tradition that there were 72 elders (simplified down to 70) who translated the Septuagint originally. Because of its ancient character and universal acceptance, the LXX is useful for a better understanding of the Jewish mindset in the pre-Christian era (collected from various sources).

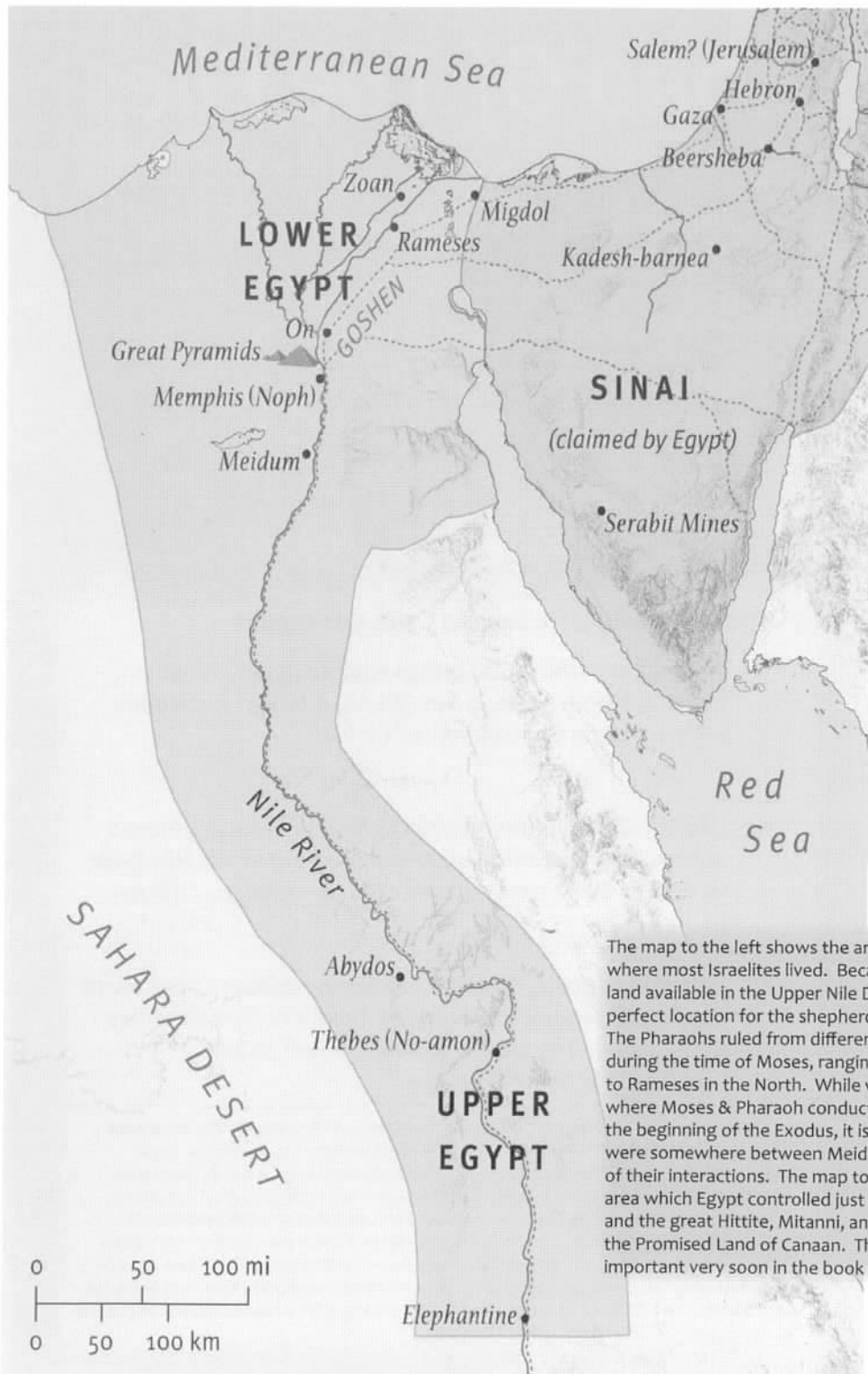
- D) However, in order to show God's protection for His chosen people (Israel), God makes a point to note that there will be no swarms of flies in Goshen (see map) so that Pharaoh would know that God dwells in Egypt (8:22-23).

2) God vs. Pharaoh ~ Round #4

- A) It is notable that Moses & Aaron do not use a staff through this cycle of Egyptian plagues. God's power is not conjured, as with the Egyptian magicians. God's power is revealed as truly potent -- He speaks and His Word is reality!
- B) Following God's spoken power, this plague "lays waste" (ruins, destroys) the land (8:24). This plague deepens the cycle of destruction in Egypt, and reveals God's increasing intention to destroy Egypt and her gods.
- C) God provides warnings, signs, judgments, and continues to "up the ante" with Pharaoh. God bends the will of man into submission to the will of God -- jealously for His people!

3) Plague #4 ~ Suffocating Swarms Of Flies

- A) Predictably, the blanketing judgment of flies in Egypt results in Pharaoh relenting. Pharaoh gives Moses permission to temporarily take the people to make sacrifices to God, but on the condition of remaining in the land of Egypt (8:26).
- B) Moses, sniffing a trap by Pharaoh, rejects the terms of the deal (8:26-27), but agrees to plead Pharaoh's case to God (8:28). Moses warns Pharaoh to stop dealing treacherously with God (8:29), and asks God to relent (8:30).
- C) God completely removes the plague the next day (8:31), and as feared, once the immediate threat is removed, Pharaoh stubbornly "did not let the people go" (8:32).



The map to the left shows the area of Goshen to the North where most Israelites lived. Because of the lush pasture land available in the Upper Nile Delta region, this was the perfect location for the shepherd people of Israel to settle. The Pharaohs ruled from different locations along the Nile during the time of Moses, ranging from Thebes in the South to Rameses in the North. While we are not completely sure where Moses & Pharaoh conducted their meetings during the beginning of the Exodus, it is most plausible that they were somewhere between Meidum and Rameses for most of their interactions. The map to the right shows the massive area which Egypt controlled just before the time of Moses, and the great Hittite, Mitanni, and Assyrian Kingdoms near the Promised Land of Canaan. These areas will become more important very soon in the book of Exodus.

