

*Exodus 8:1-32*  
*The Finger of God*

*“The very best place to see the finger of God is in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. In fact, Jesus himself borrowed this line from Pharaoh’s magicians after performing one of his miracles. The story is told in Luke 11. Jesus had driven a demon out of a man who was mute. The Bible says, ‘When the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke, and the people marveled. But some of them said, ‘He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons,’ while others, to test him, kept seeking from him a sign from heaven’ (Luke 11:14b-16).*

*Jesus responded with his famous teaching that a house divided against itself cannot stand. His point was that if he was driving out demons by the power of demons, then Satan’s house was divided and would certainly fall. But of course Jesus was not driving out demons by Beelzebul; he was driving them out by his own divine power. In order to explain what he was doing, he said, ‘But if it by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you’ (Luke 11:20). It is easy to imagine Jesus lifting up his finger as he said this, because his finger was the finger of God. Whatever gesture he may have made, Jesus was making the same point that God made when he plagued Egypt with insects. He was showing that Satan has his limits. He was also showing that in order to defeat Satan, all he had to do was to lift his little finger... If you have been touched by the finger of God, do not harden your heart to his salvation, but open your heart to Jesus.” Ryken*

- I. What does it take to wake someone up to the fact that God exists? God says that he makes his existence plain to mankind through all that he has created, through the heavens, the stars, the planets, the flora and fauna, the two genders of a man and a woman who are made in his image, and so on. He says that as a result, man is without excuse in denying His existence (Rom. 1:18-20). Man can choose to ignore the fact that he does exist and not give him a second thought as he goes about living life, he can acknowledge His existence on his terms, or he can accept God’s terms and submit to Him through belief in the gospel. Pharaoh didn’t want to know God, let alone acknowledge him. He didn’t want to be dethroned and admit that he was not a god and that there was a more powerful God than he. He wasn’t about to let the God of the Hebrews rule preeminent over him. With Pharaoh, it was a battle for power and control. He refused to submit, and it would cost him and the nation of Egypt severely. It’s a pride issue, and his reasoning has been the same tragic reasoning of mankind throughout history. Even believers struggle with fully submitting to the Lordship of Jesus Christ because of pride. They don’t want to be entirely dethroned from ruling over their own lives, even though they know that *at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:10-11)*. That’s why we are urged to offer our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God as a spiritual act of worship to Him alone. (Rom. 12:1).

Ex. 7:24-8:1

II. According to Boice, *“The ancient Egyptian had about eighty major gods and goddesses. A lot of minor deities clustered around the others, but those eighty gods and goddesses were themselves clustered around three main forces in Egyptian life: the Nile, the land, and the sun... The plagues were directed against these three forces and against the gods and goddesses of Egypt that were grouped around them. The first two plagues were directed against the gods and goddesses of the Nile and everything associated with the Nile. Four plagues were directed against the gods and goddesses of the land. The final four plagues were directed against the sky and everything associated with the sky. Even the tenth plague, the death of the firstborn, was against the sky. Pharaoh was considered the earthly incarnation of the sun god Ra, the most powerful force in the sky. His firstborn son would have been the next incarnation.”* These gods and goddesses had been embraced and worshipped by the Hebrews alongside their worship of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It was a polytheistic mentality that needed to be exposed for what it was so that God could bring his people to worship Him alone as the one and only true God. We too have been saved out of a polytheistic culture with many false gods vying for our affection. Like with the Egyptians, God has exposed them to us, His children, so that we can see them for the false gods they are . If we are not careful, we will find ourselves turning back to them to appease the sin nature, much to the detriment of our spiritual wellbeing. That is why John commands us as God’s children to guard ourselves from idols (1 Jn. 5:21).

Ex. 8:2-30

Ps. 105:30

Ps. 78:45

Luke 11:20

1 Thess. 5:9

Col. 4:5-6

III. Pharaoh’s response to the undeniable existence of God defies all reason. It makes no sense, especially with the overpowering evidence of God’s control over His creation through the different types of miraculous plagues he was bringing upon Egypt. It’s a testimony to the fact that, *“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? (Jer. 17:9)*. A deceitful *and* desperately sick heart speaks of the power of the sin nature and its desire to control the affections of the heart. Pharaoh’s response should not surprise us knowing that he didn’t want anything to do with God and His righteous ways. We on the other hand do because of the indwelling influence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. *For the believer under the New Covenant, we have a new heart (Ezekiel 36:26), are a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17), and a new man patterned after Jesus (Ephesians 4:24, Colossians 3:10). Still, there is an element of sin and flesh that remains in the believer... we can say that our identity is not deceitful and desperately wicked; yet we still have to deal with an element of inward deceit and wickedness (Guzik)*. If anything, it should make us more determined to stay true to Him despite all the enticing idols the world throws at us.

Ex. 8:15,19,32

1 Peter 2:9

Gal. 6:7

**Hebrews 3:12-14** *12See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. 13But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "Today," so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. 14We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end.*