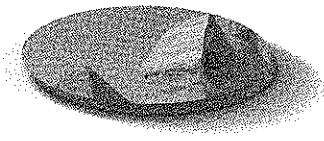


# EGYPT AND EXODUS



When studying the Egypt and Exodus time period, you will encounter all kinds of seemingly “weird” plagues in Exodus 7-12. In fact, one young adult not too long ago asked me about these plagues, and his question went something like this ...

“So, what’s the deal with all the plagues in the book of Exodus? It seems kind of random to me that God would use things like gnats, lice, and frogs to upset Pharaoh. Why did he do that? Why didn’t he just send the angel of death the first thing?”

My response was, “My brother, allow me to say that you are not the first person to be confused by the ten plagues in Exodus and you won’t be the last. I actually asked the exact same question in my confirmation class when I was sixteen. It made no sense to me (although I did find the fact that God would use ‘lice’ as beyond funny ... today, he would probably use incurable acne).”

## Why the Plagues?

The ten plagues that God rained down upon Egypt were done with a few purposes in mind but, principally, they were done to show the Egyptians (and the Israelites) that God was far more powerful than any of their false Egyptian “gods.” You see, the Israelites had been enslaved in Egypt for about four hundred years when Moses was called forth by God and sent to Pharaoh. When Pharaoh refused to allow the Israelites to leave Egypt and worship in the desert, God answered—through Moses and his brother Aaron, the priest—with the ten plagues (see Exodus 7:14-12:30).

Each of the plagues offered a tangible, visible example and display of God’s power over

everything and everyone they worshiped; and with each plague that dominated the country, Egyptian hope vanished and Israelite confidence grew. God will prove himself more powerful than anything else that we allow to have power over us.

While biblical scholars debate over the specifics of the different plagues and their complete meanings, basically each plague—the frogs (over-running the land), the cattle (dying), the Nile (turning to blood)—were manifestations or visual representations of one of the Egyptian gods being conquered by the God of Moses (and also the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ... oh, and of you and me).

## The Ten Plagues (In Order) and What They Signified

### 1. Nile River turns into blood (Exodus 7:14-24)

*The Egyptian god Hapi, the “father” of all the gods and god of the Nile*

The Nile represented life to the Egyptians. Their economy and livelihood depended on the Nile—they worshiped the river. The plague also represented the sins of the Egyptians coming back to haunt them, the blood of the Israelite children who were thrown into the Nile by Pharaoh.