

200Session 7 – Study Notes
Exodus 7:8 – 11:10
Rev. Jan Cook



Waters Turn to Blood
Exodus 7:14-25



Amphibians (Frogs)
Exodus 7:26-8:11



Gnats (Lice)
Exodus 8:12-15



Flies
Exodus 8:16-28



Disease on Livestock
Exodus 9:1-7

The Ten Plagues of Egypt



Unhealable Boils
Exodus 9:8-12



Hail and Fire
Exodus 9:13-35



Locusts
Exodus 10:1-20



Darkness
Exodus 10:21-29



Death of First-Born
Exodus 11:1-12:36

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1. The real drama in these stories is the conflict between Pharaoh and Moses' God YHWH.
2. The stage is set for Yahweh's actions, which alone can break the Pharaoh's stubborn will.
3. Is there significance to the number ten in the Exodus tradition? Consider how it is used in the Priestly creation story. The number of plagues in Exodus directly corresponds to the *ten divine utterances by which the world was created and ordered* (Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, 28, 29), though not necessarily to the order of creation.
4. In relating the ten Egyptian plagues, the Exodus in the Bible could represent a parallel account of liberation, affecting all aspects of the created world.
5. For centuries exegetes have been struggling with the order, the number and the meaning of the plagues.
6. As early as the medieval period, Jewish commentators noticed *certain patterns in the narrative* that reflected a highly organized literary structure. Patterns like these indicate that the plague narrative is a conscientiously articulated and tightly wrought composition.
7. In Deuteronomy and Leviticus we see what is called a "curse list" in which **the Lord tells the Israelites what will happen** to them if they do not obey the Lord's laws and commandments, if they breach the covenant. The maledictions in the curse-lists of

Leviticus and Deuteronomy have **been shown to be part of a stock of traditional curses** employed during the biblical period in the geographical area extending from Israel to ancient Mesopotamia.

8. Many of the Egyptian plagues mentioned in Exodus in the Bible have some correlation to an Egyptian god or goddess.
9. **If the narrative is indeed driving towards the "credal" statement of 34:6-7 then the plagues contribute to it the idea of a God "slow to anger... maintaining love to thousands"** and bringing justice to those who are evil.
10. The resistance and unbelief which God's initial revelations of his name met are shattered. Israel is now convinced into believing and obeying, even if Pharaoh is not.
11. **The plagues narrative, therefore, is significant in several ways:**
 - It fits in with and develops the main thrust of Exodus;
 - It gives us a valuable ethical apologetic,
 - A doctrinal illustration,
 - A literary satisfaction and
 - A biblical categories of understanding;
 - And in this narrative several Exodus themes surface to be built upon later.
12. What ignited the faith of the Israelites was not their physical redemption from Egypt, but rather “the mighty act which the Lord had done in Egypt”—that is, the plagues.
13. At the end of the narrative in Exodus, Israel looks back over the stilled water of the sea at a land with no people, no animals and no vegetation, a land in which creation had been undone. Israel is convinced that its redeemer is the Lord of all creation.

Reflections

1. Hardening of the heart can mean that we are no longer moved by the suffering we see around us or we look at others with judgment instead of love. Talk about what you see in society as hardening of the heart. What you see in yourself.
2. Take a look at the Plagues and De-Creation and the Plagues and Egyptian gods Table. Discuss each theory and share what the larger message is they are both trying to present. Sum it up in one sentence. How does that message apply to us today?

Why Ten Plagues?

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The Number 10 as Used in the Bible

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 10

- In the Bible, the number **10** is used **242** times.
- The designation "**10th**" is used **79** times.
- Ten is also viewed as a *complete and perfect number*, as is **3**, **7** and **12**.
- There are **ten commandments** God gave Moses on Mt. Sinai.
- A **tithe** is a **10th** of our earnings
- The Passover lamb was selected on the **10th day of the 1st month** (Exodus 12:3),
- The **10th day of the 7th month** is the Holy Day known as the Day of Atonement.
- In Genesis 1 the phrase "*God said*" is used **10** times

On this count ten could be connected to the ten divine utterances of the creation account of Genesis 1.

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Plagues and De-Creation

Creation Day	Creation Description	Plague on Egypt	Plague Description
Day 1 Gen. 1:1-5	Light out of darkness	Plague 9 Ex. 10:21-29	Darkness prevailing over light
Day 2 Gen. 1:6-8	Ordering and separation of the waters	Plague 1 Ex. 7:15-25	Chaos and destruction due to water changed into blood
Day 3 Gen. 1:9-13	Appearance of dry land and creation of vegetation	Plagues 7-8 Ex. 9:18-10:20	Destruction of vegetation by hail and locusts
Day 4 Gen. 1:14-19	Creation of luminaries	Plague 9 Ex. 10:21-29	Darkening of luminaries
Day 5 Gen. 1:20-23	Creation of birds and fish of the sea	Plagues 1-2 Ex. 7:15-8-15	Death of fish; multiplication and death of frogs
Day 6 Gen. 1:24-31	Creation of land animals and humans	Plagues 3-4 Ex. 8:16-24 Plague 5 Ex. 9:1-7 Plague 6 Ex. 9:8-17 Plague 10 Ex. 11-12	Pestilence of insects Death of beasts Boils on beasts and humans Death of firstborn

The Plagues in Response to the Pantheon of Egyptian gods.

Plague	Reference	Egyptian Deity
Nile turned to blood	Exodus 7:14 - 25	Khnum: guardian of the Nile Hapi: spirit of the Nile Osiris: Nile was bloodstream
Frogs	Exodus 8:1 - 15	Heqt: for of frog; god of resurrection
Gnats	Exodus 8:16 – 19	
Flies	Exodus 8:20 - 32	
Plague on cattle	Exodus 9:1 – 7	Hathor: mother-goddess; form of cow Apis: bull of god Ptah; symbol of fertility Mnevis: sacred bull of Heliopolis
Boils	Exodus 9:8 – 12	Imhotep: god of medicine
Hail	Exodus 9:13-35	Nut: sky goddess Isis: goddess of life Seth: protector of crops
Locusts	Exodus 10:1 – 20	Isis: goddess of life Seth: protector of crops
Darkness	Exodus 10:21 – 29	Re, Aten, Atum, Horas: all sun gods of sorts
Death of firstborn	Exodus 11:1 - 12:36	The deity of Pharaoh: Osiris, the giver of life.