

For Discussion

7:14

Theme	First Panel 1:1-4:18	Second Panel 4:19-40:38
Entering Egypt	1:1-7, Eleven tribes go to Egypt & multiply	4:19-31, Moses returns to Egypt with his family
Oppression	1:8-22, Pharaoh oppresses Israel	5:1-6:1, Oppression increases
Leaders raised up	2:1-4, Moses born	6:2-27, Moses & Aaron appointed
Moses & Pharaoh	2:5-10, Moses as a son	6:28-13:16, Moses as a deliverer
Travel to Horeb	2:11-15, Moses flees to Midian	13:17-17:7, Israel from Egypt to Sinai
Conflict	2:16-17, Moses overcomes shepherds	17:8-16, Moses overcomes Amalek
Moses and Jethro	2:18-22, Moses' Midianite family	18:1-27, Moses' Midianite family
Encounter with God at Horeb	2:23-4:18, Moses to "serve God upon this mountain," 3:12	19:1-40:38, At Horeb, Israel enters covenant with God

- What is the significance of the series of nine plagues in 7:14-10:29?
- How do the plagues go beyond the normal annual cycle of the Nile?
- What is the Lord's relation to the day to day dynamics of nature?
- In what three ways can the plagues be related to Egyptian religion?
- What is the spiritual significance of pagan "gods" like those of Egypt?
- How does the dragon miracle show God's relation to the plagues?
- How are the nine plagues organized?
- What is the significance of the lengths of the accounts of the plagues?

Significance of the Plagues: Natural Events?

- September: The Nile floods, bearing red soil and carrying toxic microorganisms.
- Frogs abound after the inundation of the Nile.
- Damp autumn months: Lice, flies, murrain and boils.
- January: Hail and rain.
- February: Appearance of locusts in early spring, over the green crops.
- March: Darkness from sandstorms.
- (April: Death of the firstborn, dated by the Passover celebration.)

But (J. Free, *Archaeology and Bible History*)

- Intensification
- Prediction
- Discrimination
- Orderliness
- Moral Purpose

Application

Heb 1:3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and **upholding all things by the word of his power**, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Col 1:17 And he is before all things, and **by him all things consist.**

Significance of the Plagues: Attack on Egyptian Gods?

Exo 12:12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and **against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD.**

Exo 18:11 Now I know that the LORD is **greater than all gods:** for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly **he was above them.**

Num 33:4 For the Egyptians buried all their firstborn, which the LORD had smitten among them: **upon their gods also the LORD**

But

- 2nd plague helps, not hurts, frogs (Heket)
- lice (3), flies (4), camels (5), boils (6), and locusts (8) aren't Egyptian gods

Plague	Religious Element	Judgment
1. Nile to blood	Hapi, god of the Nile and the annual flood	Direct attack
	Magicians	Pervert
2. Frogs	Heket, goddess of childbirth	Mock worshippers
	Magicians	Pervert
3. Lice	Magicians	Impotent
4. Flies from dust	Geb	Impotent
5. Cattle	Hathor (cow) or Apis (bull)	Direct attack
6. Boils	Magicians	Direct attack
7. Hail	Seth, god of storm and chaos	Impotent
8. Locusts	Numerous agricultural deities	Impotent
9. Darkness	Re or Horus, sun gods	Direct attack

Significance of the Plagues: Egyptian Religion (2)

1Co 10:20 But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

1Ki 18:24 And **call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD:** and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. ...

Dan 10:13 But **the prince of the kingdom of Persia** withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. ... 20 ... and now will I return to fight with the **prince of Persia:** and when I am gone forth, lo, the **prince of Grecia** shall come.

Rev 12:7 And there was war in heaven: **Michael and his angels fought against the dragon;** and the dragon fought and his angels, 8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

Significance (2)

Reversal of Creation?

Gen 1:3 And God said, **Let there be light**: and there was light.

Exo 10:21 And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, ~~that there may be~~ and **let there be darkness** over the land of Egypt, ...

But

- Non-specific alignments (e.g., swarming appears in the flood story, not just creation, and as something good; ten days of creation, but also ten commandments)
- Some expressions don't match exactly (dust of the earth in Exodus vs. dust of the land in Genesis)
- Some plagues don't fit at all (boils), or are a stretch

Remember the Dragon:

Isa 51:9 Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut **Rahab**, and wounded the **dragon (תנין)**? 10 Art thou not it which **hath dried the sea**, the waters of the great deep; ...

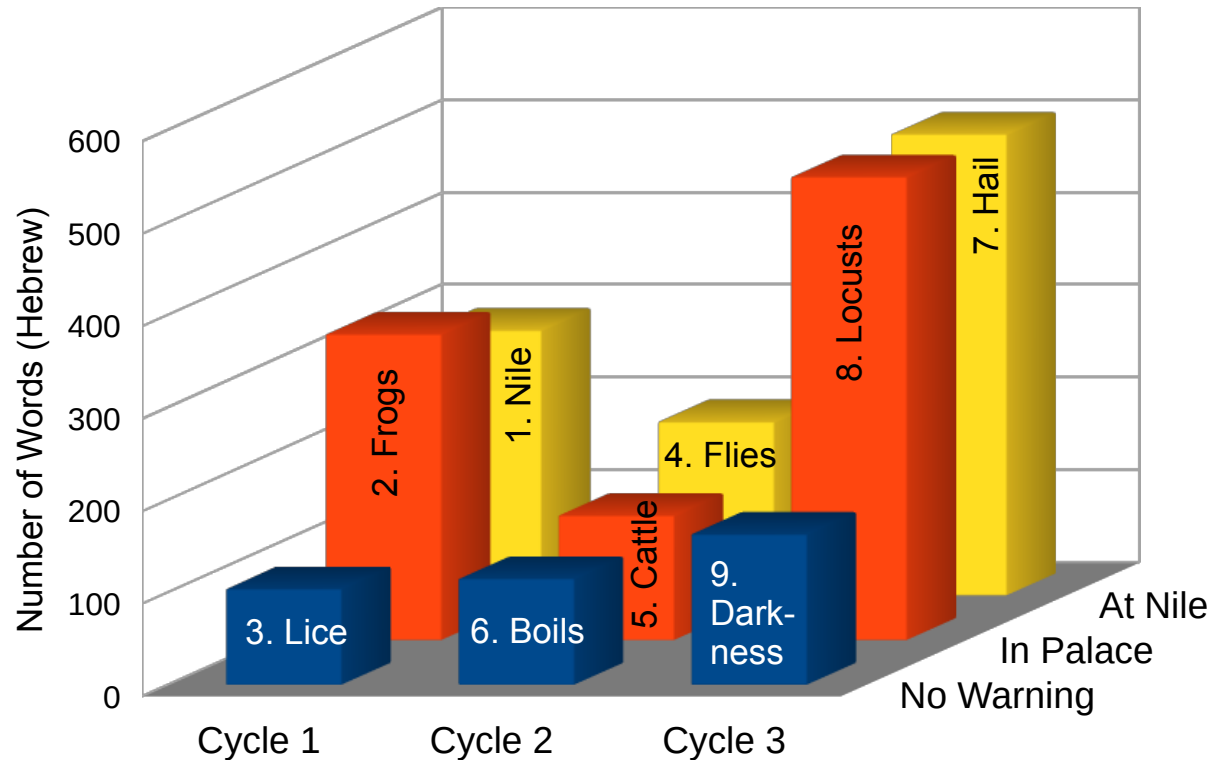
Gen 1:2 And the earth was **without form, and void**; and **darkness** was upon the face of the deep.

Jer 4:23 I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was **without form, and void**; and the heavens, and they had **no light**. 24 I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. 25 I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. 26 I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the LORD, and by his fierce anger.

Mat 25:41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, **prepared** for the devil and his angels:

Structure of the Nine Plagues

Agency			Warning and Setting
First Cycle: Aaron's Rod	Second Cycle: No Rod	Third Cycle: Moses' Rod or Hand	
7:14-25 Nile to Blood	8:20-32 Flies	9:13-35 Hail	Stand before Pharaoh at Nile in the morning
8:1-15 Frogs	9:1-7 Cattle	10:1-20 Locusts	Go to Pharaoh (in palace?)
8:16-19 Lice	9:8-12 Boils	10:21-29 Darkness	No warning



Repeated Features in the Plagues

Divine Analysis of the situation by God to his representatives (3x)

Demand to Pharaoh: “Let my people go, that they may serve me” (6x)

A declaration of God’s purpose to **make himself known** (4x)

Warning of the plague that is about to come (6x)

Exemption of the children of Israel (4x)

Command to Moses and Aaron (7x)

Imposition of the plague itself (9x)

Involvement of Pharaoh’s court **magicians** (4x)

Negotiation between Pharaoh and Moses/Aaron. (5x)

Relief as the plague is removed (5x)

Hardening of Pharaoh (9x)

Later Echoes of the Plagues

Order in Exodus	Psalm 78	Psalm 105	Rev 16
Nile to Blood	1	2	2, 3
Frogs	3	3	6
Lice		4	
Flies	2	4	
Cattle	6		
Boils			1
Hail	5	5	7
Locusts	4	6	
Darkness		1	4, 5
Firstborn	7 (last)	7 (last)	