



THE TENPLAGUES OF EGYPT

Reading:- Exodus 7.1-4, 20; 8.6, 17, 24; 9.6, 10, 23; 10.12, 21, 12.21-23, 29-30

- We're continuing on with our look at old testament accounts which picture spiritual truths throughout the Bible.
- Today we'll look at the famous account of the plagues of Egypt
- A solemn subject, but will help us, if we understand it.

Q. Does God intend for there to be lessons for us today in this account?

Q. And, if so, what are they, and how should we interpret these lessons?

- Well to answer the first question let's go to

1 Cor 10.1-5.

"Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea (that's Israelites passing across the Red

Sea); ... Now these things **were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things**, as they also lusted."

Romans 15.4

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime **were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.**"

- So the Bible itself tells us how to interpret it, we are to learn lessons and apply these things to ourselves now, so we might have hope of salvation.
- Now to our second question.

What then **are** the lessons and their interpretation?

- Well, once again the Bible itself tells us.

Because even though it is fairly easy to see some lessons in the OT without the NT, we do have some fulfilling passages of many of these things as symbols in the book of Revelation.

- So we'll look at the plagues in order, and then briefly make reference to this to prove our interpretation as to how the Bible itself symbolises these things.
- I should mention, that it's common to interpret the application of each plague to being a response to the idolatrous worship of certain specific Egyptian gods
- There's 2 reasons why this cannot be the correct interpretation:

-First it means you'd have to know obscure ancient history in order to get the meaning. So for most people the meaning would be hidden.

-Secondly it is not how the Bible itself explains it.

-I can add a **third** for good measure :-

It would only give one main lesson for all the ten plagues - that of not committing idolatry.

- This is hopelessly simplistic, and although that lesson is there, to repeat the same lesson ten times, misses the richness of the passage.
- Let me show you

Here's a brief overview

- It is common to see the captivity of God's people in Egypt, and their deliverance by Moses, as analogous to the spiritual bondage of a person before finding Christ in conversion.
- For example, the crossing of the Red sea is taken as a symbol of Baptism in the NT (1 Cor 10.2 "**And were all baptised unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea**")
- Pharaoh is like Satan and our own hard hearts keeping us in slavery and refusing to let the people go.
- Moses is like Christ our Saviour-deliverer.

- The people are like the seeker before salvation
- The Egyptians are like the lost world, and our sinful nature.
- Therefore the plagues must be the warnings and experiences of the unsaved before coming to God.
- Indeed, in Revelation, the purpose of the symbolic plagues is explained as a way to bring people to repentance (although many resist and refuse to heed the warnings, and judgements, just like the Egyptians)

-It repeatedly says "and they repented not - to give him glory- they repented not of their deeds, - of the work of their hands"

- So, knowing this, we can look at the individual plagues and explain them.
- First I'll group them, because there's an obvious way to divide them up.
 - The first 5 are together
 - The sixth is somewhat individual
 - The next 3 are together
 - And the last is on its own.

The first 5 were these:

1. The River Nile turned to blood
2. The Frogs
3. The Lice
4. The Flies
5. The death of the Cattle

(All from the natural world)

6th was:

6. The boils and blains
(afflicting their bodies)

7-9 were:

7. The Hail fire
8. The Locusts
9. The Darkness

(From the heavens)

Finally the 10th was:

10. The death of the first born.

(Directly from God)

- So quickly,

The first 5

1. The Nile river (or any river) is a water source of life, that's why people build cities on rivers, like London.

- The turning to blood is a clear symbol to us of death.
 - All the fish died.
 - Therefore this can only mean one thing spiritually -
 - the Fall of Mankind away from God resulting in our spiritual death.
 - This is true of all of us.
 - Every living soul in the sea of nations died spiritually and eventually physically, after Adam's fall.
 - That's why we don't find ourselves naturally in a relationship with God.
 - We don't have the gracious waters of God flowing to us.
 - We are dead to Him by nature, estranged from Him, we need to be brought back to life spiritually - "born again" as Christ put it.
2. The results of this are that from a polluted river, devoid of life, comes repugnant things.
 - The world is full of false teaching, and wicked ideas, which spring forth into our minds as a result of our sinful nature.
 - We easily fall into Atheistic ideas, false religions, wicked ideologies, devilish doctrines.
 - This is just like the horrible plague of frogs which comes next.
 3. Because of these things we fall into many temptations and sins.
 - We're lured into wrong things and become convinced of lies.
 - Then we commit a multitude of sins.
 - These are like the multitude of lice that are impossible to get rid of and cling to us.
 - We become characterised by sin.
 - Our deeds are like a plague upon us, and our houses.
 4. From these come the flies that swarm around us.
 - The swarm of uncontrollable consequences of our actions.
 - You must have experienced this.
 - Sin leads to terrible results, unexpected bad consequences.
 - A lie is found out, and ruins a relationship for example.
 - We steal and are punished,
 - we lose our temper and gain cuts and bruises, or hurtful reactions.
 - We commit unclean acts and it pollutes our character.
 - A stupid comment is posted online.
 - A bad picture is taken, but it's shared, put online and multiplied, goes viral - the flies have come!
 - We reject God's ways and a swarm of bad things result.
 5. People won't worship God.
 - So people put their trust in things, and they try to worship and serve them.

- They fail to repent but instead turn to idols to put their trust in.
- They live for possessions, or pleasure, or people, or football teams, or music artists, or political movements, and especially themselves.
- But none of these are worthy of our worship and service.
- They all fail us in the end.

- It's just like the Egyptians putting their trust in their livestock, especially their cattle which they treated like gods. (This is the one plague we can interpret like this)
- But God put a plague on the cattle and they all died.
- And all our 'idols' will end up failing us as well.
- That music star will get old,
- the football team will not give the satisfaction anymore,
- pleasure is short lived,
- possessions break,
- people disappoint and even betray you.
- Our idols end up being dead things.

This is how the first 5 go together

- Then Number 6 is the inner result upon our souls of these plagues.

- 6. Pain!
- Painful boils and blains.
- Afflictions upon their very skin and blood vessels.
- The penalty of sin is pain as a result, like after the Fall of Man came thorns and the pain of childbirth.
- Sin brings with it emotional pain,
 - the pains of punishments,
 - especially of conscience.

- This is like the inner pain we experience in our conscience because of all our sins.
- It makes us very unhappy.
- The pain of a guilty conscience is the sting in the tail end of sin.
- That lie, that hateful action, that theft, that unclean behaviour or word.
- Our conscience can remind us and make us feel uncomfortable, ashamed, and polluted.
- We wince with pain within to think about it.
- Our conscience gnaws away on the inside of us, because of who we are, and what we've done, and life hurts.

Then comes the next three terrible plagues.

- Hail-fire, locusts and darkness. (All come from the 'heavens')

- These are the responses and chastisements of God to our sins.
- Remember, all these plagues so far are not final judgements, but warnings for us to turn and repent.

Do we heed them?

7. God warns now with events in our lives

- He allows storms to come.
- Maybe a terrible event in our family or circle of friends.
 - An accident,
 - a great disappointment,
 - a tragedy.
- This is like the great hail fire from heaven upon Egypt.
- They had never experienced anything like it before.
- It's the same with us.
- We can be shocked by the things that happen to us in life, things that we've never experienced before.
- Just like this great event in Egypt.
- Life can become hard, and difficulties and troubles arise like a storm.
- Hurtful things happen like being hit by hail-fire.
- When bad things happen in life men can harden themselves even more and blame God, cursing Him and blaspheming Him, instead of what they should do - repent, seeing they've brought this upon themselves.

8. Then comes a swarm of locusts

- This is the 'loss' that comes upon us. Locusts eat everything.
- The Egyptians lost all their crops.
- And we will lose things as well:
 - our character,
 - any knowledge of God we had,
 - our friends,
 - our health,
 - and any number of other things.

-Our life will be stripped bare of meaning and purpose.

- Satan and his hosts will take them all, even though they promised you the world.

9. This brings a terrible darkness into your life.

- You'll be unable to understand much of anything.
- Especially spiritual things.
- You'll be ignorant of yourself, your state and condition, you won't see where to go or what to do.
- The plague of darkness was so bad the people had to stay in their houses, a depressing darkness that can be felt.
- And we'll be shut in in life,
 - lost,
 - blind,
 - depressed,
 - and living in darkness.
- Living without God in a dark world.
- This is no way to live.

- But note, the Israelites still had light in their dwellings.
- This pictures hope for the sincere seeker after God.
- He/she will have an amount of light of understanding from the Gospel.

10. Finally the tenth plague (a direct judgement)

- If all these other plagues fail to cause us to turn to God, and away from our sins, then we'll lose our souls, and God will harden our hearts to never be able to turn to Him.
- This is the final spiritual death.
- This is like the death of the first born.
- But not death for the symbolic people of God who would be freed by Moses.
- No, they sacrificed to God that unblemished passover Lamb, put the blood on the doorposts, and the angel of death passed over their house.
- This is just like conversion.
- We see Christ as our Saviour, our sacrifice on the cross, taking our sin and offering a perfect sacrifice, His blood applied to our hearts.
- Then, like the Egyptians, our old nature dies and we become a new creation, walking over that Red Sea.
- We become a Christian, and we leave behind our old life of sin and bondage, and Christ rescues us, leading us out, like Moses into the promised land.
- Our home is now in heaven, not this old plagued world.

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- Finally, to end, let me show you some of those symbolic references to these OT plagues in the NT, in Revelation.

-I haven't time to explain them, but hopefully after explaining the plagues you'll see the meaning.

The apostle John says: ["And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God"](#)

["The first angel sounded \(a warning trumpet\), and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood"](#)

(Plague 7 and 1-The plague of hail fire, and waters turned to blood)

["And there fell a noisome and a grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast"](#) (plague 6- the boils)

["The second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea"](#) (plague 1 the Nile)

["The rivers and fountains of waters became blood"](#)

(No more life giving waters, no grace from God)

["And a third part of the \(sun, moon and stars\) was darkened"](#) (plague 9 of darkness)

"And they repented not to give Him glory" (If this is you, then don't continue to resist God).

"And the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit (plague 9-darkness)

And there came out locusts upon the earth and unto them was given power as the scorpions...and there was stings in their tails and their power was to hurt men" (plague 8 locusts)

"And the fifth angel poured out his vial (of wrath) ...and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain" (plague 9 darkness, and plague 6 painful boils)

"The great river Euphrates; ..the water thereof was dried up.. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet for they are the spirits of devils" (doctrines of demons- plague 2- frogs)

"And there fell upon men great hail out of heaven and men blasphemed God because of the plague of hail" (plague 7 hail-fire)

"And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold,.. silver, .. brass..stone and wood..neither they repented of their murders, nor their sorceries, nor their fornication, nor of their thefts". (May this not be true of you)

- So, just some examples of the way these plagues are symbolised later on in the Bible
- Great warnings for us all.
- A call to repent of our sins, and to be delivered out of the terrors and misery of a lost life without God.
- But He won't leave us to perish, He will send warnings, mini punishments and judgements.
- But, crucially, He has sent His Son Jesus Christ the Saviour, like Moses of old, to bring us out of this captive 'Egypt' world.

-We cannot save ourselves, just like the Israelites, - we need a deliverer - Like they had Moses, we have Christ.

- These plagues may seem harsh, but they are the kindness of God to break our stubborn wills.
- To release us into a life of blessings and provision *from* God.
- A life of fellowship and peace *with* Him, instead of conflict.

Come to Him today through Christ - that "[Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world](#)", and be free of the plagues of an unconverted life.

Let's pray.

