

What was the meaning and purpose of the ten plagues of Egypt?"

The Ten Plagues of Egypt—are found in Exodus 7—12. The plagues were ten disasters sent upon Egypt by God to convince Pharaoh to free the Israelite slaves from the bondage and oppression they had endured in Egypt for 100 of years. When God sent Moses to deliver the children of Israel from bondage in Egypt, He promised to show His wonders as confirmation of Moses' authority (Exodus 3:20). This confirmation was to serve at least three purposes: to show the Israelites that the God of their fathers was alive and worthy of their worship and to show the Egyptians that their gods were nothing. And to show justice must be done.

The Israelites had lost faith in the God of their fathers. They still prayed because God heard them. They believed He existed and worshiped Him, but they doubted that He could, or would, break the yoke of their bondage. The Egyptians, like many pagan cultures, worshiped a wide variety of nature-gods and attributed to their powers the natural phenomena they saw in the world around them.

When Moses approached Pharaoh, demanding that he let the people go, Pharaoh responded by saying, "Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go" (Exodus 5:2). Thus began the challenge to show whose God was God.

The first plague, turning the Nile to blood, was a judgment against Apis, the god of the Nile, Isis, goddess of the Nile, and Khnum, guardian of the Nile. The river, which formed the basis of daily life and the national economy, was devastated, as millions of fish died in the river and the water was unusable. Pharaoh was told, "By this you will know that I am the LORD" (Exodus 7:17).

The second plague, bringing frogs from the Nile, was a judgment against Heqet, the frog-headed goddess of birth. Frogs were thought to be sacred and not to be killed. God had the frogs invade every part of the homes of the Egyptians, and when the frogs died, their stinking bodies were heaped up (Exodus 8:13–14). God had told Moses Pharaoh would not let Israel go until God had done His wonders..

The third and fourth plagues: gnats and flies were a judgment on Set, the god of the desert and Uatchit the fly god.

Egypt's magicians admitted God was God. But Pharaoh did not let Israel go.

The fifth plague, the death of livestock, was a judgment on the goddess Hathor and the god Apis, who were both depicted as cattle. As with the previous plague, God protected His people from the plague, while the cattle of the Egyptians died.

The sixth plague, boils, was a judgment against several gods over health and disease (Sekhmet, Sunu, and Isis). This time, the Bible says that their religious leaders were powerless against the God of Israel.

These plagues were designed to convince Pharaoh and all the people “that there is none like me in all the earth” (Exodus 9:14)..

The seventh plague, hail, attacked Nut, the sky goddess; Osiris, the crop fertility god; and Set, the storm god. This hail was unlike any that had been seen before. It was accompanied by a fire which ran along the ground, and everything left out in the open was devastated by the hail and fire. Again, the children of Israel were miraculously protected, and no hail damaged anything in their lands.

The eighth plague, locusts, again focused on Nut, Osiris, and Set. The later crops, wheat and rye, which had survived the hail, were now devoured by the swarms of locusts. There would be no harvest in Egypt that year.

The ninth plague, darkness, was aimed at the sun god, Re, who was symbolized by Pharaoh himself. For three days, the land of Egypt was smothered with an unearthly darkness, but the homes of the Israelites had light.

The tenth and last plague, the death of the firstborn males, was a judgment on Isis, the protector of children. It was a judgment against Pharaoh and the people of Egypt for Pharaoh had said; to all of his people, "Every son that is born of the Israelite slaves, I want you to throw him into the river to the crocodiles. You can save the daughters alive" (Exodus 1:22). Justice was done for the murder of hundreds, maybe thousands of all those Hebrew Babies thrown into the Nile for crocodile bait

In this plague, God was teaching the Israelites a deep spiritual lesson that pointed to Christ. Unlike the other plagues, which the Israelites survived by virtue of their identity as God's people, this plague required an act of faith by them. God commanded each family to take an unblemished male lamb kill it and eat.

The remaining portion of the lamb was to be burned up. This was the first day of Unleaven Bread. The blood of the lamb was to be smeared on the top and sides of their doorways, and the lamb was to be roasted and eaten that night.

Any family that did not follow God's instructions would suffer in the last plague. God described how He would send the death angel through the land of Egypt, with orders to slay the firstborn male in every household, whether human or animal. The only protection was the blood of the lamb on the door. When the angel saw the blood, he would pass over that house and leave it untouched (Exodus 12:23). This is where the term Passover comes from. Passover is a memorial of that night in ancient Egypt when God delivered His people from bondage. First Corinthians 5:7 teaches that Jesus became our Passover when He died to deliver us from the bondage of sin, our Egypt.. While the Israelites found God's protection in their homes, every other home in the land of Egypt experienced God's wrath as their loved ones died. This grievous event caused Pharaoh to finally release the Israelites.

By the time the Israelites left Egypt, they had a clear picture of God's power, God's protection, and God's plan for them. For those who were willing to believe, they had convincing evidence that they served the true and living God. Sadly, many still failed to believe, which led to other trials and lessons by God. The result for the Egyptians and the other ancient people of the region was a dread of the God of Israel. Even after the tenth plague, Pharaoh once again hardened his heart and sent his chariots after the Israelites. When God opened a way through the Red Sea for the Israelites, then drowned P

Pharaoh and all of Pharaoh's army, the power of Egypt was crushed, and the fear of God spread through the surrounding nations (Joshua 2:9–11). This was the very purpose that God had declared at the beginning. We can still look back on these events today to confirm our faith in, and our fear of, this true and living God, the Judge of all the earth.

Justice was done.