

- **Top 2 deadliest animals on earth. 2. Humans 437,000 deaths. 1. Mosquitos 750,000 deaths per year.** (Malaria, Dengue fever)
- Bugs can be deadly. You may not be afraid of frogs, but how many are afraid of bugs. Spiders, flying bees and wasps.
- **One of the most annoying is the fly.** The secret to killing flies.
- The next two plagues are Gnats or Lice and Flies.
- **Now there have been different ways that theologians have divided the plagues up. Some put them in pairs.** 1st 2 deal with the Nile. Next 2 involve insects (gnats and flies) 5th and 6th plagues were both diseases (Livestock and boils) the 7th and 8th effected the crops (hail and locusts) and the last 2 involve darkness.
- I like what many scholars going back to the **early rabbis** did by **grouping them in 3 sets of three** with the **last plague standing alone** as the climax of God’s judgement.
- **The plus of grouping them in 3s is that there are patterns that emerge.**
 - Before the **first plague** in each cycle, **Moses meets Pharaoh in the early morning.**
 - Before the **second plague** he **confronts Pharaoh at his palace.**
 - **Third plague-** Always comes **without any warning.**

This next plague is the third plague in the first group so there is no warning given to Pharaoh that this plague is coming. Watch this.

¹⁶ Then the Lord said to Moses, “Tell Aaron, ‘Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the ground,’ and throughout the land of Egypt the dust will become gnats.” ¹⁷ They did this, and when Aaron stretched out his hand with the staff and struck the dust of the ground, gnats came on people and animals. All the dust throughout the land of Egypt became gnats. ¹⁸ But when the magicians tried to produce gnats by their secret arts, they could not.

Since the gnats were on people and animals everywhere, ¹⁹ the magicians said to Pharaoh, “This is the finger of God.” But Pharaoh’s heart was hard and he would not listen, just as the Lord had said.

- **No Warning**
- **There’s debate over which Egyptian god this is attacking.** Some say it is the god of the earth – Geb and that God Almighty is showing that He has authority over the very earth in Egypt. I think that’s likely.
- God creates **gnats out of the dust.** Like he did with people in creation, but now he reverses the order and the gnats have dominion over the people rather than people over the animals. Defies nature. Supernatural. Chaos.
- **Gnats or Lice everywhere would bring chaos. It would disrupt how the Egyptians priests worshipped.**
 - The Egyptians believed that Pharaoh had the power to maintain cosmic order or universal equilibrium.
 - Pharaoh can’t be the true God because he was unable to maintain order and balance the world.

- **Egyptian priests prided themselves on being physically pure.** They bathed before they did their daily rituals and shaved off all their hair.
- They **couldn’t do any of their priestly rituals when they were physically covered in gnats or lice.**

- *¹⁸ But when the magicians tried to produce gnats by their secret arts, they could not. First one they couldn’t replicate.* Satan has power, but he also has limits. This gets the attention of the Magicians

¹⁹ the magicians said to Pharaoh, “This is the finger of God.” But Pharaoh’s heart was hard and he would not listen, just as the Lord had said.

- *Not saving belief. They just realize this is a god more powerful than them.*
- *They use the word Elohim (god) plural, not Yahweh.*
- *To be saved you have to make Him Lord, not just acknowledge his power as God. They aren’t bowing the knee here.*

²⁰ Then the Lord said to Moses, “Get up early in the morning and confront Pharaoh as he goes to the river and say to him, Notice, he’s confronting Pharaoh by the river in the early morning. It’s the first in the next set of three plagues.

‘This is what the Lord says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me. ²¹ If you do not let my people go, I will send swarms of flies on you and your officials, on your people and into your houses. The houses of the Egyptians will be full of flies; even the ground will be covered with them. ²² “But on that day I will deal differently with the land of Goshen, where my people live; no swarms of flies will be there, so that you will know that I, the Lord, am in this land. ²³ I will make a distinction (a redemption – buying them out of slavery) between my people and your people. This sign will occur tomorrow.”’

²⁴ And the Lord did this. Dense swarms of flies poured into Pharaoh’s palace and into the houses of his officials; throughout Egypt the land was ruined by the flies.

- Making flies swarm in this type of density is a miracle in itself, but another is that there are no flies at all in Goshen where the Israelites live.
- And Goshen is right in the heart of Egypt. No natural explanation for this.
- **God differentiates.** The idea that God treats everyone the same is ridiculous. It’s an argument used to try to portray God as unfair.
- We all have access to God equally, but we are not all created the same. Some are smarter, some are better looking, some come from better families.
- **God here distinguishes between HIS People and those who are NOT HIS PEOPLE and he treats them differently. Don’t you want to be one of God’s people?**
- The difference is not that the Egyptians sin and the Israelites don’t. The distinction God makes is that these are my people and these aren’t.
- *²⁵ Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, “Go, sacrifice to your God here in the land.”*
- **What was the request made of Pharaoh?** As we’ve gone along, it looks like God is only asking for them to go a three day journey to worship Him. Then return
- **But God never says He will let the Israelites return after worshipping.**

- **Isn't God's intention that those who are in bondage are free forever.** God doesn't say I'm freeing you from your addiction for three days and then you can go back to it. God frees you from your sin for good.
- Because it looks like what God asks for and what he intends are different, some have accused God of is deceiving Pharaoh. Lying to him. But there is no lie here.
- **I think what we are seeing here is God dealing with Pharaoh like everyone making demands of him. He is meeting Pharaoh where he is.**
- Pharaoh is well aware that God's intention is for the Israelites to be free forever. And God knows Pharaoh wants them to remain slaves forever.
- **When I want to buy a bus for \$15k, I offer \$13k because they know it's only worth \$15k. That's why they priced it at \$17k.**
- **We see this as Pharaoh starts to negotiate with God through Moses.** ²⁵ *Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "Go, sacrifice to your God here in the land."*
- **Pharaoh offers a compromise.** You can worship God, but you have to do it here. You can't leave this place behind.
- **That's the devil's plan for you. You can worship God, but only if you stay here in your sin & in your addictions & with your same friends and same TV shows.**

God does not allow us to compromise in our worship. We worship His way totally. We worship in Spirit and in truth, not in negotiated compromise.

²⁶ *But Moses said, "That would not be right. The sacrifices we offer the Lord our God would be detestable to the Egyptians. And if we offer sacrifices that are detestable in their eyes, will they not stone us?"* ²⁷ *We must take a three-day journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to the Lord our God, as he commands us."*

- **Moses argument is we will be killing animals that the Egyptians see as sacred. If they see this there will be a riot and they will try to kill us.**

That's why we need to be three days away from here. Three days Journey. We aren't taking a three-day weekend retreat. Three days distance is what we need to put between us and the influence of Egypt.

- Our true worship of God will be seen as an abomination to the world. Isn't that what you see today. Truly living for God is under intense hostility from the world.

²⁸ *Pharaoh said, "I will let you go to offer sacrifices to the Lord your God in the wilderness, but you must not go very far. Now pray for me."*

- So, when Moses puts his foot down, Pharaoh tries to compromise again. Just don't go very far.
 - The world says, don't get to radical with your faith. Don't go too far.
 - If you go three days distance you will be beyond my control. Beyond my influence.
- ²⁹ *Moses answered, "As soon as I leave you, I will pray to the Lord, and tomorrow the flies will leave Pharaoh and his officials and his people. Only let Pharaoh be sure that he does not act deceitfully again by not letting the people go to offer sacrifices to the Lord."* **The devil always lies. That's his native language.**

³⁰ *Then Moses left Pharaoh and prayed to the Lord,* ³¹ *and the Lord did what Moses asked. The flies left Pharaoh and his officials and his people; not a fly remained.* ³² *But this time also Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not let the people go. He hardens his heart again.*

- **How far must I be separated from my old life to be able to worship God. Three days. How long was Christ dead for?**