

Ten Plagues

Hashem (G-d) created the world through TEN specific utterances (*ma'amaros*) – the Egyptians DENIED this; considering the world to be “theirs” and corrupted creation; therefore Hashem visited upon them TEN strikes/plagues (*makos*), corresponding to the TEN utterances – this was done in reverse order, each plague “correcting” a corresponding corruption of an utterance. Hashem gave the Children of Israel the TEN statements/commandments (*dibros*) to teach us how to sustain the world that He created with TEN utterances.

(adapted from Sefer Haparshiyos Shemos #2 page 176)

Plague (and retribution)	Utterance (and explanation)	Commandment (and lesson)
<p><u>Death of the First Born</u> Egypt took the first (prime) for their own selfish use so Hashem “took away” their first</p>	<p><u>“In the beginning Hashem created Heaven & Earth”</u> – with G-d’s first primary/holies did He create</p>	<p><u>“I am Hashem Your G-d”</u> First and foremost: know that I am Hashem</p>
<p><u>“Darkness”</u> Egypt “denied” that G- d is the “light” (instructor of right & wrong) contending that they are the light – so light was taken from them</p>	<p><u>“And G-d said let there be light”</u> – to “enlighten our eyes to distinguish between good and evil</p>	<p><u>“You shall have no other gods”</u> Distinguish between right (light) and wrong (darkness)</p>
<p><u>“Locust”</u> Egypt “denied” the distinction between good and evil so Hashem sent a tiny creature to swarm over their land and distinguish between their land & Jewish land</p>	<p><u>“And G-d said let their be a firmament within the waters”</u> – even under water one should be able to distinguish between “above” (superior) and “below” (inferior)</p>	<p><u>“Do not take the name of Hashem in vain”</u> – even if you only serve One G-d you must distinguish between the superior and inferior</p>
<p><u>“Hail”</u> – Egypt “denied” Hashem’s gift of separating the land from the water to allow existence of man & beast, claiming the eternity of the Nile to be their eternal support (not being dependent on rain). So Hashem sent hail to destroy the vegetation they had grown</p>	<p><u>“Hashem said let the waters gather so the dry land can be seen”</u> – dry land emerging from the waters to allow for existence of man</p>	<p><u>“Shabbos to Hashem”</u> – remember all existence comes from Hashem</p>
<p><u>“Boils”</u> – Egypt “denied” that Hashem created all things of beauty and pleasure, (claiming achievement of these phenomena) so Hashem shamed & pained them with boils</p>	<p><u>“And Hashem said let the earth produce vegetation”</u> – so their could be creation of man and beast</p>	<p><u>“Honor father and mother”</u> Remember that you are created from something which preceded you</p>
<p><u>“Animal plague”</u> – Egypt “denied” that Hashem created the sun and moon for beauty, healing and calendar, so Hashem brought death to their animals illustrating how in one cycle of the sun – it can be all taken away</p>	<p><u>“Hashem said let their be lights in the sky”</u> – Hashem created the sun to heal and beautify</p>	<p><u>“Do not murder”</u> – even if one murders in darkness Hashem created the sun to discover the crime</p>
<p><u>“Attack of wild animals”</u> – Egypt “denied” that life is for living and sent the Jews into the wild to be mauled by animals - so I will attack you with these animals</p>	<p><u>“Hashem said let the waters teem with life”</u> – Hashem first created life to give life</p>	<p><u>“Do not commit adultery”</u> – Animals instinctively practice fidelity, humans; do not forfeit your life where it does not belong</p>
<p><u>“Lice”</u> – Egypt “denied” that G-d brought life from dust and instead used it for bricks and mortar to oppress and murder the Jews, so Hashem turned the dust into lice</p>	<p><u>“Hashem said let the earth produce living creatures”</u> from the dust came life</p>	<p><u>“Do not steal (kidnap)”</u> – even a louse – as small as a speck of dust - does not steal</p>
<p><u>“Frogs”</u> – Egypt “denied” that mankind is created in the image of Hashem, in order to distinguish between good and evil so – frogs, the “lowliest” of animals will torment you</p>	<p><u>“Hashem said let us make man in our image”</u> – Man is created in the image of Hashem – destined and designed to rule over all of the animal kingdom</p>	<p><u>“Do not bear false witness against your neighbor”</u> – I (Hashem) attest that you are made in My image and you should attest that as well – do not bear false witness</p>
<p><u>“Blood”</u> – Egypt “denied” that Hashem prepared ample sustenance for all creations and thus denied the poor, stole from others labor –Hashem transformed their source of sustenance (the Nile) into blood</p>	<p><u>“Hashem said I grant you all vegetation for food”</u> – I have prepared ample sustenance for all</p>	<p><u>“Do not be envious”</u> – Do not deny that I have prepared ample sustenance for all by desiring someone else’s</p>