

The Exodus: A Preview of the Plagues

Read Exodus 4:1-9

Before we talk about the plagues, let's back up and take a closer look at the three miracles God had earlier given Moses.

When God called Moses at the burning bush, Moses threw up five objections to God's call. The third was, "*What if they will not believe me or listen to what I say? They may say, 'The Lord has not appeared to you'*" (Exodus 4:1, NASB). In response, God gave him three signs to perform. They were:

- Moses threw his staff on the ground, and it became a snake. When he picked it up by the tail, it became a staff again (4:2-5).
- Moses put his hand inside his clothing, on his chest, and it became white and leprous. When he repeated the action, it became well again (4:6-8).
- Moses poured water on the ground, and it became blood (4:9).

When Moses performed the signs for the Israelites, they believed (4:30). When he performed the snake sign before Pharaoh during their second confrontation, the sorcerers of Egypt simulated the sign, and Pharaoh wasn't convinced (7:9-13). There's no mention of the second sign, leprosy, being performed for Pharaoh. The third sign became the first plague: water turning to blood (7:14-25).

But remember, the entire Exodus event was engineered by God as an opportunity to glorify Himself before Israel, Egypt, and the entire world. He wanted all to know that He was the one true God, Creator and Lord of all. How did these three signs begin to accomplish that?

- They show God to be the master of creation. He controls creatures and the elements of nature.
- They show God to be the master of disease. He controls health, both disease and healing. It is His prerogative to give wellness and to take it away.
- They hint at a God who is the master of life and death. In Biblical terms, blood is the substance of life. The life of a creature is in its blood. He can create life-blood from simple water. He can then turn that life-blood into an instrument of death.

All of these points are made more dramatically and on a grander scale in the plagues to come.