

### WARM-UP

- Have you ever considered owning a more affordable version of a known brand? Why or why not?
- What is one thing you make sure that you never run out of?
- Has there ever been a title or position you really wanted? What did you do to achieve it? Did you get it?

### WORD

*<sup>15</sup>“Go to Pharaoh in the morning, as he is going out to the water. Stand on the bank of the Nile to meet him, and take in your hand the staff that turned into a serpent. <sup>16</sup>And you shall say to him, ‘The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you, saying, “Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness.” But so far, you have not obeyed. <sup>17</sup>Thus says the LORD, “By this you shall know that I am the LORD: behold, with the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water that is in the Nile, and it shall turn into blood.””*

**EXODUS 7:15-17**

(Read also **EXODUS 7:18-19**; study **EXODUS 7:20-8:19**.)

The miracles that God performed through the ten plagues in Egypt were to make His power known to both Israel and Egypt, and to prove to them that there is only one true God. Before each plague, God, through Moses, told Pharaoh “*Let my people go.*” God wanted His people to leave behind the oppression they experienced so they could walk in His plans and promises for them. God made it clear that the plagues were in response to Pharaoh’s disobedience. The first three plagues went like this: the water in the Nile River turned into blood, then frogs swarmed over Egypt, and thirdly, gnats covered the whole nation. Today, we’ll look at what we can learn from the first three plagues inflicted on Egypt.

# 1 | People tend to rely on counterfeit gods and idols.

*<sup>21</sup>And the fish in the Nile died, and the Nile stank, so that the Egyptians could not drink water from the Nile. There was blood throughout all the land of Egypt. <sup>22</sup>But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts. So Pharaoh's heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.*

## **EXODUS 7:21-22**

In the first plague, God targeted the pride and joy of Egypt—the Nile. This river was Egypt's source of life, being a channel for trade, drinking water, and food, to name a few. More specifically, it was a key source of security and identity. In fact, they worshiped several gods whom they believed were connected to the Nile. Knowingly or not, we too may have counterfeit gods. These could be things or people that take the place of God in our lives that we put our trust, security, and identity in. What is one counterfeit god that people usually encounter? Have you experienced it before? How did you submit this to God?

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## 2 | There is only one true God.

<sup>18</sup>The magicians tried by their secret arts to produce gnats, but they could not. So there were gnats on man and beast. <sup>19</sup>Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said. **EXODUS 8:18-19**

Ultimately, even the Egyptian magicians failed to replicate the plagues God was inflicting on Egypt. They had turned water into blood and made frogs appear, but they could not replicate the gnat plague, even admitting to Pharaoh that it was *the finger of God* (Exodus 8:19). Not a single human being can come close to matching the power of the one true God. There is no other god that can compare to Him. He is the only unfailing source of life, security, and significance. Recall a time when you looked elsewhere for security or significance. How did you come to realize that only God can satisfy?

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### APPLICATION

- What are your alternative sources of life (e.g., career, relationship)? How can you come to the point of submitting these to God?
- What do you think are the counterfeit gods you rely on for security and significance (e.g., social media, self-care routines)? What steps can you take to begin seeing these with the right perspective?
- What is one thing you can do to refocus your worship on God each day? How may you encourage others to do the same?

