

First Day of Pesach 5780: Division of the Ten Plagues

1. R. Nehemia's Opinion:

The plagues were brought in Pairs.

Blood and Frogs (Yad Chazaka): These are nuisances. While it is inconvenient to have the water supply contaminated for several weeks, this is not insurmountable. There are many societies which have survived for long periods with tainted water supplies. Frogs are not life threatening. Yet, their noise pollution is more bothersome than the first plague in that they are an active disturbance, whereas blood is passive.

Lice and Wild Animals (or Hornets) (zero'ah netuyah): While not life-threatening involves bodily attacks.

Pestilence and Boils (moreh gadol): This is more severe because the first involves animal death and the second is progressive in that it compromises the bodily health of the Egyptians.

Hail and Locust (otot): These create serious challenges to the food supply and the economic life of the land.

Thick Darkness and Death (moftim): This is the most severe of all

2. Midrash

The plagues were divided in five groupings:

Blood

Boils

Frogs

Hail

Lice

Locusts

Wild Animals (Hornets)

Darkness

Cattle Plague

Death of Firstborn