

Blood & Frogs - God is in Control

Source Sheet by Rabbi Marc Levene

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1. Psalms 105:26-36

(26) He sent His servant Moses, and Aaron, whom He had chosen. (27) They performed **His signs among them, His wonders**, against the land of Ham. (28) He sent darkness; it was very dark; did they not defy His word? (29) He turned their waters into blood and killed their fish. (30) Their land teemed with frogs, even the rooms of their king. (31) Swarms of insects came at His command, lice, throughout their country. (32) He gave them hail for rain, and flaming fire in their land. (33) He struck their vines and fig trees, broke down the trees of their country. (34) Locusts came at His command, grasshoppers without number. (35) They devoured every green thing in the land; they consumed the produce of the soil. (36) He struck down every first-born in the land, the first fruit of their vigor.

א. תהילים ק"ה:כ"ו-ל"ו

(כו) וְשַׁלַּח מֹשֶׁה עֲבָדוֹ אֶת־מֹרְאֵי אֱשֶׁר
בְּחֶרֶב־בּוֹ: (כז) שָׁמוּ-בְכֶם דְּבַר־יְיָ אֶת־וַיִּתֵּן
אִמְפֹתִים בְּאַרְצָךְ הָם: (כח) וְשַׁלַּח חֹשֶׁךְ
וַיַּחְשֹׁךְ וְלֹא-מָרוּ אֶת־דַּבְרוֹ [דְּבָרוֹ]: (כט)
הִפְךָ אֶת־מִימֵיהֶם לְדָם וַיָּמָת אֶת־דַּגְתָּם:
(ל) שָׂרַץ אֲרָצָם צַפְרָדַיִם כְּסַחֲרֵי
מַלְכֵיהֶם: (לא) אָמַר וַיָּבֵא עָרֹב כְּנֹיִם
בְּכָל־גְּבוּלָם: (לב) נָתַן גֶּשֶׁמִּיהֶם בְּרָד אֵשׁ
לְהַבּוֹת בְּאַרְצָם: (לג) וַיִּהְיֶה גֶפְנִים וְחֵאנָתָם
אֵינְשֵׁי-רֵץ גְּבוּלָם: (לד) אָמַר וַיָּבֵא אַרְבֵּה
אֵילָן וְאֵין מִסְפָּר: (לה) וַיֵּאכַל כָּל־עֵשֶׂב
בְּאַרְצָם וַיֵּאכַל פְּרֵי אֲדָמָתָם: (לו) וַיִּהְיֶה
כָּל־בְּכוֹר בְּאַרְצָם רֵאשִׁית לְכָל־אֹנָם:

2. Rashi on Psalms 105:30:1

Their land swarmed with frogs Said Rabbi Johanan: Wherever water would lie, frogs would lie.

ב. רש"י על תהילים ק"ה:ל"א:

שרץ ארצם צפרדעים. אמר רבי יוחנן
בכל מקום שהיו רובצים מים היו
רובצים צפרדעים:

3. Psalms 78:42-51

(44) He turned their rivers into blood; He made their waters undrinkable. (45) He inflicted upon them swarms of insects to devour them, frogs to destroy them. (46) He gave their crops over to grubs, their

ג. תהילים ע"ח:מ"ב-נ"א

(מד) וַיַּהֲפֹךְ לְדָם יְאֵרֵיהֶם וַיִּנְלִיחֵם
בְּלִי־יִשְׁתִּיּוֹן: (מה) יִשְׁלַח בָּהֶם עָרֹב
וַיֵּאכְלֵם וַצַּפְרָדַיִם וַתִּשְׁחִיתֵם: (מו) וַיִּתֵּן
לְחֹסִיל יְבוּלָם וַיִּגְיַעֵם לְאַרְבֵּה: (מז) יַהֲרֹג

produce to locusts. (47) He killed their vines with hail, their sycamores with frost. (48) He gave their beasts over to hail, their cattle to lightning bolts. (49) He inflicted His burning anger upon them, wrath, indignation, trouble, a band of deadly messengers. (50) He cleared a path for His anger; He did not stop short of slaying them, but gave them over to pestilence. (51) He struck every first-born in Egypt, the first fruits of their vigor in the tents of Ham.

בַּבְּרָד גִּפְנִים וְשִׁקְמוֹתָם בְּחַנְמַל: (מח)
 וַיִּסְגַּר לַבְּרָד בְּעֵירָם וּמְקִנֵיהֶם לְרִשְׁפִים:
 (מט) יִשְׁלַח-לָכֶם | חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ עַבְרָה וְנֹעַם
 וְצָרָה מְשַׁלַּחַת מְלֹאכֵי רָעִים: (נ) יִפְלֹס
 נֹתִיב לְאָפוֹ לֹא-חֲשָׂה מַמּוֹת נִפְשָׁם וְחַיֵּיהֶם
 לַדָּבָר הַסְּגִיר: (נא) וַיִּבֶן כְּלֵי-בָכוֹר בְּמִצְרָיִם
 רֵאשִׁית אוֹנִים בְּאֶהְ-לֵיהֶם:

4. **Exodus 7:14-28**

(14) And the LORD said to Moses, “Pharaoh is stubborn; he refuses to let the people go. (15) Go to Pharaoh in the morning, as he is coming out to the water, and station yourself before him at the edge of the Nile, taking with you the rod that turned into a snake. (16) And say to him, ‘The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you to say, “Let My people go that they may worship Me in the wilderness.” But you have paid no heed until now. (17) Thus says the LORD, “By this you shall know that I am the LORD.” See, I shall strike the water in the Nile with the rod that is in my hand, and it will be turned into blood; (18) and the fish in the Nile will die. The Nile will stink so that the Egyptians will find it impossible to drink the water of the Nile.” (19) And the LORD said to Moses, “Say to Aaron: Take your rod and hold out your arm over the waters of Egypt—its rivers, its canals, its ponds, all its bodies of water—that they may turn to blood; there shall be blood throughout the land of Egypt, even in vessels of wood and stone.” (20) Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD commanded: he lifted up the rod and struck the water in the Nile in the sight of Pharaoh and his courtiers, and all the water in the Nile was turned into blood (21) and the fish in the Nile died. The Nile stank so that the Egyptians

שמות ז': י"ד-כ"ח

(יד) וַיֹּאמֶר יי אֱלֹהֵי-מֹשֶׁה כְּבֹד לֵב פִּרְעֹה
 מֵאֵן לְשַׁלַּח הָעָם: (טו) לֵךְ אֶל-פִּרְעֹה
 בַּבֹּקֶר הַנֶּה יֵצֵא הַמִּיָּמָה וְנִצַּבְתָּ לְקִרְיָתוֹ
 עַל-שֵׁפֶת הַיָּאֵר וְהִמַּטָּה אֲשֶׁר-נִהַפְדָּ לְנֹחַשׁ
 תִּקַּח בְּיָדְךָ: (טז) וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו יי אֱלֹהֵי
 הָעִבְרִים שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלֶיךָ לֵאמֹר שְׁלַח
 אֶת-עַמִּי וְעַבְדִּנִּי בַמִּדְבָּר וְהִגַּה לֹא-שָׁמַעְתָּ
 עַד-כֹּה: (יז) כֹּה אָמַר יי בְּזֹאת תֵּדַע כִּי אֲנִי
 יי הַיְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי מִצְרָיִם | בַּמַּטֵּה אֲשֶׁר-בְּיָדִי
 עַל-הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר בַּיָּאֵר וְנִהַפְכוּ לְדָם: (יח)
 וְהִדְגָּה אֲשֶׁר-בַּיָּאֵר תָּמוּת וּבָאֵשׁ הַיָּאֵר
 וְנִלְאָו מִצְרָיִם לְשִׁתוֹת מַיִם מִן-הַיָּאֵר: (יט)
 וַיֹּאמֶר יי אֱלֹהֵי-מֹשֶׁה אָמַר אֱלֹהֵי-אֶהְרֹן
 קַח מַטֵּה וְנִטְהַרְדָּה עַל-מִימֵי מִצְרָיִם
 עַל-נְהַרְתָּם | עַל-יִאֲרֵיהֶם וְעַל-אֲגַמֵיהֶם
 וְעַל כָּל-מִקְנֵה מִימֵיהֶם וְהָיִוּ-דָם וְהָיָה דָם
 בְּכָל-אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם וּבַעֲצִים וּבְאֲבָנִים: (כ)
 וַיַּעֲשׂוּ-כֵן מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן כְּאֲשֶׁר | צִוָּה יי
 וַיָּרָם בַּמַּטֵּה וַיִּבֶן אֶת-הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר בַּיָּאֵר
 לְעֵינֵי פִרְעֹה וְלְעֵינֵי עַבְדָּיו וַיִּהְיוּ
 כָּל-הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר-בַּיָּאֵר לְדָם: (כא) וְהִדְגָּה
 אֲשֶׁר-בַּיָּאֵר מָתָה וַיִּבָּאֵשׁ הַיָּאֵר וְלֹא-יָכְלוּ
 מִצְרָיִם לְשִׁתוֹת מַיִם מִן-הַיָּאֵר וַיָּהִי הַדָּם
 בְּכָל-אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם: (כב) וַיַּעֲשׂוּ-כֵן חֲרִטְמֵי
 מִצְרָיִם בְּלִטְיָהֶם וַיִּחַזְקוּ לִב-פִּרְעֹה
 וְלֹא-שָׁמַע אֲלֵיהֶם כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יי (כג) וַיִּפֹּן

could not drink water from the Nile; and there was blood throughout the land of Egypt. (22) But when the Egyptian magicians did the same with their spells, Pharaoh's heart stiffened and he did not heed them—as the LORD had spoken. (23) Pharaoh turned and went into his palace, paying no regard even to this. (24) And all the Egyptians had to dig round about the Nile for drinking water, because they could not drink the water of the Nile. (25) When seven days had passed after the LORD struck the Nile, (26) the LORD said to Moses, “Go to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD: Let My people go that they may worship Me. (27) If you refuse to let them go, then I will plague your whole country with frogs. (28) The Nile shall swarm with frogs, and they shall come up and enter your palace, your bedchamber and your bed, the houses of your courtiers and your people, and your ovens and your kneading bowls.

פֶּרְעֹה וַיָּבֵא אֶל-בֵּיתוֹ וְלֹא-שָׁת לָבוֹ
 גַּם-לְזָאת: (כד) וַיִּחַפְּרוּ כָל-מִצְרַיִם סְבִיבֹת
 הַיָּאֵר מַיִם לְשָׁתוֹת כִּי לֹא יָכְלוּ לְשָׁתֹת
 מִמַּיִם הַיָּאֵר: (כה) וַיִּמְלֵא שְׂבָעַת יָמִים
 אַחֲרֵי הַכּוֹת-יְיָ אֶת-הַיָּאֵר: (פו) וַיֹּאמֶר
 יְיָ אֶל-מֹשֶׁה בֹּא אֶל-פֶּרְעֹה וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו
 כֹּה אָמַר יְיָ שְׁלַח אֶת-עַמִּי וַיַּעֲבֹדֵנִי: (כז)
 וְאִם-מָאֵן אַתָּה לְשַׁלַּח הַגָּה אֲנֹכִי נֹגֵף
 אֶת-כָּל-גְּבוּלְךָ בַּצִּפְרֻדָּעִים: (כח) וְשָׂרְץ
 הַיָּאֵר צִפְרֻדָּעִים וְעָלוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבַחֲנֹךָ
 מִשְׁכַּבְּךָ וְעַל-מִטְתְּךָ וּבְגִיתְךָ עַבְדֶּיךָ וּבְעֻמָּה
 וּבַתְּנוּרֶיךָ וּבְמִשְׁאָרוֹתֶיךָ:

5. **Exodus 8:1-11**

(1) And the LORD said to Moses, “Say to Aaron: Hold out your arm with the rod over the rivers, the canals, and the ponds, and bring up the frogs on the land of Egypt.” (2) Aaron held out his arm over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. (3) But the magicians did the same with their spells, and brought frogs upon the land of Egypt. (4) Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, “Plead with the LORD to remove the frogs from me and my people, and I will let the people go to sacrifice to the LORD.” (5) And Moses said to Pharaoh, “You may have this triumph over me: for what time shall I plead in behalf of you and your courtiers and your people, that the frogs be cut off from you and your houses, to remain only in the Nile?” (6) “For tomorrow,” he replied. And [Moses] said,

ה. **שמות ח' א'-י"א**

(א) וַיֹּאמֶר יְיָ אֶל-מֹשֶׁה אָמַר אֶל-אַהֲרֹן
 נִטֵּה אֶת-יָדְךָ בַּמֶּטֶף עַל-הַנְּהָרוֹת
 עַל-הַיַּאֲרִים וְעַל-הָאֲגָמִים וְתַעַל
 אֶת-הַצִּפְרֻדָּעִים עַל-אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם: (ב) וַיִּטֵּן
 אַהֲרֹן אֶת-יָדוֹ עַל מַיִם מִצְרָיִם וַתַּעַל
 הַצִּפְרֻדָּע וַתִּכַּס אֶת-אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם: (ג)
 וַיַּעֲשׂוּ-כֵן הַחֹרְטֻמִּים בְּלִטְיָהֶם וַיַּעֲלוּ
 אֶת-הַצִּפְרֻדָּעִים עַל-אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם: (ד)
 וַיִּקְרָא פֶּרְעֹה לְמֹשֶׁה וּלְאַהֲרֹן וַיֹּאמְרוּ
 הִעֲתִירוּ אֵלָיִי וְיִסְרוּ הַצִּפְרֻדָּעִים מִמֶּנִּי
 וּמֵעַמִּי וְאֲשַׁלְּחָה אֶת-הָעָם וַיִּזְבְּחוּ לַיהוָה
 וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה לְפֶרְעֹה הֲתִפְאָר עָלַי לְמַתִּי וְ
 אֶעֱתִיר לָךְ וְלַעֲבָדֶיךָ וְלַעֲמָךְ לְהַכְרִית
 הַצִּפְרֻדָּעִים מִמֶּךָ וּמִבְּתֵיךָ רַק בַּיָּאֵר
 תִּשְׁאָרְנָה: (ו) וַיֹּאמֶר לְמַחֵר וַיֹּאמֶר כְּדַבְּרְךָ
 לְמָעַן תִּלְעַ כִּי-אֵין פִּי אֶלְקִינוּ: (ז) וְסָרוּ

“As you say—that you may know that there is none like the LORD our God; (7) the frogs shall retreat from you and your courtiers and your people; they shall remain only in the Nile.” (8) Then Moses and Aaron left Pharaoh’s presence, and Moses cried out to the LORD in the matter of the frogs which He had inflicted upon Pharaoh. (9) And the LORD did as Moses asked; the frogs died out in the houses, the courtyards, and the fields. (10) And they piled them up in heaps, till the land stank. (11) But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he became stubborn and would not heed them, as the LORD had spoken.

הַצְּפֹרְדָּעִים מִמָּוֶה וּמִבְּתֵיךָ וּמֵעַבְדֶיךָ
 וּמֵעַמֶּךָ בְּרַק בִּיְאֹר תִּשְׁאַרְנָה: (ח) וַיֵּצֵא
 מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן מֵעִם פַּרְעֹה וַיֵּצְעֲקוּ מִשָּׁה
 אֶל־יְיָ עַל־דִּבְרֵי הַצְּפֹרְדָּעִים אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם
 לַפַּרְעֹה: (ט) וַיַּעַשׂ יְיָ כְּדִבְרֵי מֹשֶׁה וַיָּמָתוּ
 הַצְּפֹרְדָּעִים מִן־הַבָּתִּים מִן־הַחֲצֵרוֹת
 וּמִן־הַשְּׂדֵדוֹת: (י) וַיִּצְבְּרוּ אֹתָם חֲמָרִם חֲמָרִם
 וַתִּבְאֵשׁ הָאָרֶץ: (יא) וַיֵּרָא פֶּרְעֹה כִּי הִיָּתְהָה
 הַדְּרוֹחָה וְהַכֶּבֶד אֶת־לְבָבוֹ וְלֹא שָׁמַע אֶלְקָם
 כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְיָ (ס)

6. **Rashi on Exodus 8:2:1**

AND THE FROGS (lit. frog) CAME UP — Really there was only one frog, but when they struck at it, it was split into many swarms. This is a Midrashic explanation of the usage of the singular noun here (cf. Sanhedrin 67b; Exodus Rabbah 10:4). But as a literal explanation one must say that the swarm of the frogs is denoted by the singular form. Similar is, (v. 14) “and there was the כִּנָּם” — the swarm of insects, in old French pedulier; i. e. a swarm of lice. So, too, here, ותעל הצפרדע means: and there came up a grenouillière (old French) i. e. a swarm of frogs.

רש"י על שמות ח' ב' א'
 ותעל הצפרדע. צפרדע אחת היתה והיו
 מפין אותה והיא מתפצלת נחילים נחילים,
 זהו מדרשו (סנהדרין ס"ז). ופשוטו יש
 לומר, שרוץ הצפרדעים קורא לשון
 יחידות; וכן ותהי הכנם – הרחישיה,
 פדולייר"א בלעז, ואף ותעל הצפרדע –
 גרינולייר"א בלעז:

