

Exodus 08 - 2nd Plague: Frogs; 3rd Plague: Lice; 4th Plague: Flies

I. Exodus from Egyptian bondage: Israel's redemption, liberation, and preservation (Ex 1:1—18:27)

(1) Redemption from Egypt (Ex 1:1—12:30)

(C) God's sovereignty over Pharaoh and the Egyptian pantheon (Ex 5:1—12:30)

(d) 10 plagues (Ex 7:14—12:30)

(ii) Frogs (8:1-15)

(iii) Gnats (8:16-19)

(iv) Flies (8:20-22)

Exodus 8

(ii) Frogs (8:1-15)

1 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: "Let My people go, so that they may serve Me.

1 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me.

1 he told Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and tell him, 'This is what the LORD says: "Let my people go so they may serve me.

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me.

2 But if you refuse to let *them* go, behold, I am going to strike your entire territory with frogs.

2 But if you refuse to let *them* go, behold, I will smite your whole territory with frogs.

2 And if you refuse to let them go, then I'm going to strike all your territory with frogs.

2 And if thou refuse to let them go, behold, I will smite all thy borders with frogs:

- Again, Moses gave Pharaoh a warning, just as he did before the first plague (Cf. 7:16)

— In the third plague of each set of three, God reveals the plague without warning

3 The Nile will swarm with frogs, which will come up and go into your house, and into your bedroom and on your bed, and into the houses of your servants, and on your people, and into your ovens and kneading bowls.

3 The Nile will swarm with frogs, which will come up and go into your house and into your bedroom and on your bed, and into the houses of your servants and on your people, and into your ovens and into your kneading bowls.

3 The Nile will swarm with frogs. They'll come up and enter your house, your bedroom, your bed, and your servants' houses. They'll jump on your people, into your ovens, and into your kneading troughs.

3 And the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into thine house, and into thy bedchamber, and upon thy bed, and into the house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneadingtroughs:

4 So the frogs will come up on you, your people, and on all your servants."'"

4 So the frogs will come up on you and your people and all your servants."'"

4 The frogs will be all over you and your servants."'"

4 And the frogs shall come up both on thee, and upon thy people, and upon all thy servants.

5 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Extend your hand with your **staff** over the rivers, over the streams, and over the pools, and make frogs come up on the land of Egypt.'"

5 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your hand with your staff over the rivers, over the streams and over the pools, and make frogs come up on the land of Egypt.'"

5 Then the LORD told Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'Stretch out your hand with your staff over the rivers, over the Nile River, and over the ponds, and bring up frogs over the land of Egypt.'"

5 And the LORD spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch forth thine hand with thy rod over the streams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and cause frogs to come up upon the land of Egypt.

- "...staff" - a symbol of God's mighty power in the hand of his servant (Cf. 4:1-8,20; 7:9,20; 8:16; 9:23; 10:13,22; 14:16; 17:5,9)

6 So Aaron extended his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and **covered the land of Egypt.**

6 So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt.

6 So Aaron stretched his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt.

6 And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs came up, and covered the land of Egypt.

- "...covered the land of Egypt" - one can only imagine the frustration brought by such a multiplication of these creatures. They were probably everywhere underfoot bringing distress to the housewives who attempted to clear the house of them only to find that they made their way into the kneading troughs and even into the beds.

— It must have been a unique experience to come home from a long day's work, slip into bed only to find that it has already been occupied by slimy, cold frogs!

— Whatever popularity the goddess Heqt must have enjoyed prior to this time would have been greatly diminished with the multiplication of these creatures who at this point must have tormented her devotees to no end.

7 However, the soothsayer priests did the same with their secret arts, making frogs come up on the land of Egypt.

7 The magicians did the same with their secret arts, making frogs come up on the land of Egypt.

7 But the magicians did the same thing with their secret arts, and they brought up frogs on the land of Egypt.

7 And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt.

- The magicians could increase the number of frogs, but couldn't make them go away; they would've better shown their power by removing the frogs rather than adding more

— Satanic power never benefits the welfare of humanity; it is always destructive

— The cessation of these plagues was as much a sign of God's power as the plagues themselves

8 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said, "Plead with the LORD to remove the frogs from me and from my people; and I will let the people go, so that they may sacrifice to the LORD."

8 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said, "Entreat the LORD that He remove the frogs from me and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may sacrifice to the LORD."

8 Then Pharaoh called to Moses and Aaron and said, "Plead with the LORD so that he may remove the frogs from me and my people. I'll let the people go so they can offer sacrifices to the LORD."

8 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, Intreat the LORD, that he may take away the frogs from me, and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may do sacrifice unto the LORD.

9 And Moses said to Pharaoh, "The honor is yours to tell me: when shall I plead for you and your servants and your people, that the frogs be destroyed from you and your houses, *that* they be left only in the Nile?"

9 Moses said to Pharaoh, "The honor is yours to tell me: when shall I entreat for you and your servants and your people, that the frogs be destroyed from you and your houses, *that* they may be left only in the Nile?"

9 Moses told Pharaoh, "You decide when I should plead for you, your servants, and your people to remove the frogs from you and your household. They'll remain only in the Nile River."

9 And Moses said unto Pharaoh, Glory over me: when shall I intreat for thee, and for thy servants, and for thy people, to destroy the frogs from thee and thy houses, that they may remain in the river only?

- To impress upon Pharaoh that a personal God was performing these miraculous plagues, Moses asked Pharaoh to set the time when the frogs should be removed

10 Then he said, "Tomorrow." So he said, "*May it be* according to your word, so that you may know that there is no one like the LORD our God.

10 Then he said, "Tomorrow." So he said, "*May it be* according to your word, that you may know that there is no one like the LORD our God.

10 Pharaoh said, "Tomorrow."

Moses said, "It will be just as you say, so that you may know that there is no one like the LORD our God.

10 And he said, To morrow. And he said, Be it according to thy word: that thou mayest know that there is none like unto the LORD our God.

11 The frogs will depart from you and your houses, and from your servants and your people; they will be left only in the Nile."

11 The frogs will depart from you and your houses and your servants and your people; they will be left only in the Nile."

11 The frogs will leave you, your house, your officials, and your people. They'll remain only in the Nile River."

11 And the frogs shall depart from thee, and from thy houses, and from thy servants, and from thy people; they shall remain in the river only.

12 Then Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh, and Moses cried out to the LORD concerning the frogs which He had inflicted upon Pharaoh.

12 Then Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh, and Moses cried to the LORD concerning the frogs which He had inflicted upon Pharaoh.

12 Then Moses and Aaron left Pharaoh's presence, and Moses cried out to the LORD about the frogs which he had sent on Pharaoh.

12 And Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh: and Moses cried unto the LORD because of the frogs which he had brought against Pharaoh.

13 The LORD did according to the word of Moses, and the frogs died out of the houses, the courtyards, and the fields.

13 The LORD did according to the word of Moses, and the frogs died out of the houses, the courts, and the fields.

13 The LORD did just as Moses asked, and the frogs died in the houses, in the courtyards, and in the fields.

13 And the LORD did according to the word of Moses; and the frogs died out of the houses, out of the villages, and out of the fields.

14 So they piled them in heaps, and the land stank.

14 So they piled them in heaps, and the land became foul.

14 They gathered them up into large piles and the land smelled terrible.

14 And they gathered them together upon heaps: and the land stank.

15 But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he **hardened his heart** and did not listen to them, just as the LORD had said.

15 But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and did not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

15 But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and did not listen to them, just as the LORD had predicted.

15 But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.

- "...hardened his heart" - see notes on 4:21

Pharaoh expressed his moral rebellion and lost human condition when he hardened his own heart in the face of the displays of divine power (Ex 8:15,19,32). Thus, when God willed to harden Pharaoh (Ex 9:12; 10:1,20,27), He simply confirmed Pharaoh in his unbelief and allowed him to suffer the consequences of his sinful choices.

- Pharaoh's choice: Ex 5:2
- NT reference: Rom 9:14-18

The Frogs

The second of the wonders further proved the powerlessness of the gods of Egypt. The land was covered with a plague of frogs in such abundance that they infested the Egyptians' houses and beds (Ex 8:2-14). One of the principal goddesses of the land was Hekt, the wife of the creator of the world, who was always shown with the head and the body of a frog. The frog was one of a number of sacred animals that might not be intentionally killed, and even their involuntary slaughter was often punished with death. The frogs came out of the sacred Nile (Ex 8:3) and Egypt's devotion to them prevented them from dealing with them: they soon had decaying carcasses throughout the land, resulting in a stinking horror.

(iii) Gnats (8:16-19)

16 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Extend your staff and strike the dust of the earth, so that it may turn into **gnats** through all the land of Egypt.'"

16 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the earth, that it may become gnats through all the land of Egypt.'"

16 Then the LORD told Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'Stretch out your staff, strike the dust of the ground, and the dust will become gnats throughout the land of Egypt.'"

16 And the LORD said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.

- Notice the fact that God gives no warning to Pharaoh before issuing the third plague
- "...gnats" - *kinnim*, a small two-winged fly that resembles a mosquito; also translated as "lice" or "sand fleas"

17 They did so; and Aaron extended his hand with his staff and struck the dust of the earth, and there were gnats on every person and animal. **All the dust of the earth turned into gnats** through **all the land of Egypt**.

17 They did so; and Aaron stretched out his hand with his staff, and struck the dust of the earth, and there were gnats on man and beast. All the dust of the earth became gnats through all the land of Egypt.

17 They did this. Aaron stretched his hand out with his staff, struck the dust of the land, and gnats came on people and animals—all the dust of the ground became gnats throughout the land of Egypt.

17 And they did so; for Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and smote the dust of the earth, and it became lice in man, and in beast; all the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt.

- "...All the dust of the earth turned into gnats" - the gnats rose from the dust and resembled dust because they were so small

— They crept into the eyes, nose and ears and were as numerous as the dust

- "...all the land of Egypt" - this plague, along with the first two, may have also affected the Israelites

— In the record of the remaining plagues, it is specifically stated that God did not send those plagues on the Israelites (Cf. v22-23; 9:4,6,26)

— Thus, later references to the plagues affecting "all the land of Egypt" should be understood as excluding Goshen, where the Israelites lived

18 The soothsayer priests tried with their secret arts to produce gnats, but they could not; so there were gnats on every person and animal.

18 The magicians tried with their secret arts to bring forth gnats, but they could not; so there were gnats on man and beast.

18 The magicians tried to do the same thing with their secret arts, but they were unable to bring out the gnats. The gnats were on the people and the animals.

18 And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not: so there were lice upon man, and upon beast.

19 Then the soothsayer priests said to Pharaoh, "**This is the finger of God.**" But **Pharaoh's heart was hardened**, and he did not listen to them, just as the LORD had said.

19 Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he did not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

19 The magicians told Pharaoh, "It is the finger of God!" But Pharaoh's heart was stubborn and he did not listen to them, just as the LORD had predicted.

19 Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.

- If in the first two plagues, which the magicians replicated, they were simply creating simulations of these things or just creating the impression that they were able to do these things, v18-19 would not be written this way

- "...This is the finger of God" - the magicians gave credit to "God" (*elohim*), not *Yahweh*

— They did not ascribe this miracle to the God of the Israelites, but only noted that it obviously had supernatural origins

— As a counter to this thinking, a distinction is made in the remaining plagues as God exempted the Israelites from all future plagues. This should've been sufficient proof that the plagues originated from the God of Israel.

— To make this point even more obvious, the fourth and fifth plagues were merely announced by Moses, not brought through the mediation of either himself or Aaron, no doubt for the purpose of precluding Pharaoh or his wise men from thinking that the plagues were produced by either Moses or Aaron.

- "...Pharaoh's heart was hardened" - see notes on 4:21

Gnats (Sand Fleas)

The Hebrew word for "gnat" comes from a root meaning to dig; it is probable that the insect was one which digs under the skin of men. This was an embarrassment to their great god of the earth, Geb, to whom they gave offerings for the bounty of the soil.

The plague was also designed to humiliate the official priesthood in the land. The priests in Egypt were noted for their physical purity. Daily rites were performed by a group of priests known as the Uab or 'pure ones.' Their purity was physical rather than spiritual. They were circumcised, shaved the hair from their heads and bodies, washed frequently, and were dressed in beautiful linen robes. It would seem doubtful that the priesthood in Egypt could function effectively having been polluted by the presence of these insects. They, like their worshipers, were inflicted with the pestilence of this occasion. Their prayers were made ineffective by their own personal impurity with the presence of gnats on their bodies.

The Plagues of Egypt			
NO.	DESCRIPTION	SCRIPTURE	IMITATION?
1.	Water to Blood	Ex 7:14-25	Yes
2.	Frogs	Ex 8:1-15	Yes
3.	Gnats	Ex 8:16-19	No
4.	Flies	Ex 8:20-32	No
5.	Disease on Cattle	Ex 9:1-7	No
6.	Boils	Ex 9:8-12	No
7.	Hail	Ex 9:13-35	No
8.	Locusts	Ex 10:1-20	No
9.	Darkness	Ex 10:21-29	No
10.	Death of the First Born	Ex 12:29-36	No

(iv) Flies (8:20-22)

20 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh, as he comes out to the water; and say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: "Let My people go, so that they may serve Me.

20 Now the LORD said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh, as he comes out to the water, and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me.

20 The LORD told Moses, "Get up early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh as he's going down to the water. You are to say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: "Let my people go so they can serve me.

20 And the LORD said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh; lo, he cometh forth to the water; and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me.

- Moses announced this plague to Pharaoh in the same way he announced the first plague: in the morning, beside the Nile River (Cf. 7:15)

21 For if you are not going to let My people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies on you and on your servants and on your people, and into your houses; and the houses of the Egyptians will be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground on which they *live*.

21 For if you do not let My people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies on you and on your servants and on your people and into your houses; and the houses of the Egyptians will be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground on which they *dwell*.

21 But if you don't let my people go, I'll send swarms of insects upon you, your servants, your people, and your households. The houses of Egypt—and even the ground on which they stand—will be filled with swarms of insects.

21 Else, if thou wilt not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy houses: and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground whereon they are.

- Again, creatures that man was mandated to control (Gen 1:26-28) brought destruction and misery to the land, as well as to the Egyptian people

22 But on that day I will set apart the **land of Goshen**, where My people are living, so that no **swarms of flies** will be there, in order that you may know that I, the LORD, am in the midst of the land.

22 But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where My people are living, so that no swarms of flies will be there, in order that you may know that I, the LORD, am in the midst of the land.

22 On that day I'll treat the land of Goshen where my people live differently so that swarms of insects won't be there. As a result, you will know that I the LORD am in the midst of the

land.

22 And I will sever in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there; to the end thou mayest know that I am the LORD in the midst of the earth.

- "...land of Goshen" - in the delta region of Egypt (Cf. Gen 46:28-29,33-34; 47:1-6,11)

— God miraculously distinguished between the two peoples to emphasize to Pharaoh that He was Israel's God, the Author of the plagues, and He was sovereign over the whole land of Egypt

- Up until here the plagues had affected all of Egypt, including the Israelites. But with this particular plague of flies, there is a division between the peoples. God starts to set aside Israel as a special exception, immune to the remaining plagues (see note on v19).

- "...swarms of flies" - these insects were both annoying and destructive, even moreso than the gnats

— When enraged, they fasten themselves upon the human body, especially upon the edges of the eyelids (this may in part have been responsible for the great deal of blind men in the land)

— They also tortured, 'devoured' (Ps 78:45) the men, and disfigured them by the swellings produced by their sting, but also killed the plants in which they deposited their eggs

23 I will put a division between My people and your people. Tomorrow this sign will occur.""

23 I will put a division between My people and your people. Tomorrow this sign will occur.""

23 I'll make a distinction between my people and your people, and this sign will occur tomorrow.""

23 And I will put a division between my people and thy people: to morrow shall this sign be.

24 Then the LORD did so. And thick swarms of flies entered the house of Pharaoh and the houses of his servants, and the land was laid waste because of the swarms of flies in all the land of Egypt.

24 Then the LORD did so. And there came great swarms of flies into the house of Pharaoh and the houses of his servants and the land was laid waste because of the swarms of flies in all the land of Egypt.

24 The LORD did this, and dense swarms of insects came into the house of Pharaoh and into the houses of his servants. The land was ruined throughout Egypt because of the swarms of insects.

24 And the LORD did so; and there came a grievous swarm of flies into the house of Pharaoh, and into his servants' houses, and into all the land of Egypt: the land was corrupted by reason of the swarm of flies.

25 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said, "Go, sacrifice to **your God** within the land."

25 Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said, "Go, sacrifice to your God within the land."

25 Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "Go, offer sacrifices to your God in the land."

25 And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land.

- For the first time, Pharaoh gave permission for the Israelites to sacrifice to Yahweh, but he would not allow them to leave Egypt ("within the land")

- "...your God" - Pharaoh admitted that Yahweh was the God of Israel, but he did not admit that he had an obligation to obey Him

26 But Moses said, "It is not permissible *for us* to do so, because we will sacrifice to the LORD our God that which is an abomination to the Egyptians. If we sacrifice that which is an abomination to the Egyptians before their eyes, will they not stone us?"

26 But Moses said, "It is not right to do so, for we will sacrifice to the LORD our God what is an abomination to the Egyptians. If we sacrifice what is an abomination to the Egyptians before their eyes, will they not then stone us?"

26 "It wouldn't be right to sacrifice in this way," Moses replied, "because if we do, we will sacrifice to the LORD our God what is offensive to the Egyptians. If we offer sacrifices that are offensive to the Egyptians in front of them, they'll stone us, won't they?"

26 And Moses said, It is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the LORD our God: lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us?"

- The Egyptians regarded the animals the Israelites would have sacrificed as holy (set apart as special) because they were manifestations of their gods

— Consequently, the sacrifices would have been an abomination to them, both in the types of animals that the Israelites would've sacrificed (lambs), and the manner in which they would've sacrificed them

— The Egyptians also practiced animal sacrifices, but they had rigorous procedures for cleansing the animals prior to the sacrifice, which the Israelites wouldn't have observed

27 We must go a three days' journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to the LORD our God, just as He commands us."

27 We must go a three days' journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to the LORD our God as He commands us."

27 We must go a three-day journey into the desert, and we'll offer sacrifices to the LORD our God just as he has told us."

27 We will go three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the LORD our God, as he shall command us.

28 Pharaoh said, "I will let you go, so that you may sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness; only you shall not go very far away. **Plead for me.**"

28 Pharaoh said, "I will let you go, that you may sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness; only you shall not go very far away. Make supplication for me."

28 Then Pharaoh said, "I'll let you go so you can offer sacrifices to the LORD your God in the desert. But you must not go very far away. Pray for me."

28 And Pharaoh said, I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness; only ye shall not go very far away: intreat for me.

- Pharaoh relented and gave permission for them to go a short ways into the wilderness to sacrifice

- "...Plead for me" - again, Pharaoh asked Moses to pray that God would remove the plague of flies (Cf. v9)

29 Then Moses said, "Behold, I am going to leave you, and I will plead with the LORD that the swarms of flies may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people tomorrow; only do not let Pharaoh deal deceitfully again in not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD."

29 Then Moses said, "Behold, I am going out from you, and I shall make supplication to the LORD that the swarms of flies may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people tomorrow; only do not let Pharaoh deal deceitfully again in not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD."

29 Moses said, "Right now I'm going to leave you, and I'll pray to the LORD that the swarms of insects may depart from Pharaoh, from his officials, and from his people tomorrow. But Pharaoh, don't continue lying by not letting the people go to offer sacrifices to the LORD."

29 And Moses said, Behold, I go out from thee, and I will intreat the LORD that the swarms of flies may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people, to morrow: but let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more in not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD.

30 So Moses left Pharaoh and pleaded with the LORD.

30 So Moses went out from Pharaoh and made supplication to the LORD.

30 Then Moses left Pharaoh's presence and prayed to the LORD.

30 And Moses went out from Pharaoh, and intreated the LORD.

31 The LORD did as Moses asked, and removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people; not one remained.

31 The LORD did as Moses asked, and removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants and from his people; not one remained.

31 The LORD did what Moses asked, and the swarms of insects departed from Pharaoh, his officials, and his people. Not one remained.

31 And the LORD did according to the word of Moses; and he removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people; there remained not one.

32 But **Pharaoh hardened his heart** this time also, and he did not let the people go.

32 But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and he did not let the people go.

32 But this time also Pharaoh hardened his heart, and he did not let the people go.

32 And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go.

- "...Pharaoh hardened his heart" - even though the Lord graciously removed the flies, every last one of them, from Egypt, Pharaoh hardened his heart again

The Scarabs

The fourth of the plagues were "swarms" ("of flies" is not in the original). The word is *'arob*, a swarm, possibly suggesting incessant motion.

The deification of the scarab beetle is still conspicuous, even today, in the jewelry and artifacts celebrating ancient Egypt. Amon-Ra, the king of the gods, had the head of a beetle. Some of the giant scarabs were even accorded the honor of mummification and entombment with the Pharaohs.

This is particularly bizarre since the scarab is actually a dung beetle. The insect is about the size of a nickel and feeds on dung in the fields or the side of the road. When animals defecate, these insects swarm from their holes in the ground and collect their provender for future meals by forming it into round balls about the size of golf balls, which they roll across the ground to their underground dwellings.

Since they seemed to "come from nowhere" and perhaps because these perfectly round balls were possibly associated with the sun, these beetles became associated with creation. (Also, the Egyptians seem to have had the mistaken notion that the scarabs deposited larvae in the spheres, but that is not true.)

The plague of swarms of scarabs, with mandibles that could saw through wood, and destructive qualities worse than termites, must have caused extreme consternation since

they were so venerated and thus were not to be interfered with! Pharaoh called Moses, pleaded for a cessation, hinted at the possibility of compromise, and even asked to be prayed for (Ex 8:28). But God doesn't compromise; the judgments continued.