

# Are Ticks the Third Plague? A Spiritual Wake-Up Call for America

As summer continues on and the temperature climbs, another, smaller threat makes its annual advance: the tick. Once confined to deep woods and rural pastures, these tiny invaders now lurk in our backyards, parks and hiking trails, transmitting Lyme disease and other illnesses with a single, nearly invisible bite. Health officials warn that 2025 could rival the worst years on record for tick-borne infections, and doctors emphasize recognition of early signs, “fatigue, fever, joint pain and the telltale bull’s-eye rash,” so that “if diagnosed early, Lyme disease can be treated effectively” before it becomes “chronic or life-altering.”

But what if this uptick in tick activity echoes something far more ancient?

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As reported by Israel365 News, Jewish tradition has long taught that the plagues of Egypt will return in magnified form at the time of final redemption. The Old Testament prophet Micah wrote, “I will show him wondrous deeds as in the days when You sallied forth from the land of Egypt” (Mic. 7:15). Midrash Tanchuma expands on this, declaring that “just as God struck the Egyptians with 10 plagues, so too He will strike the enemies of the Jewish people at the time of the Redemption.” Rabbi Bahya ben Asher adds that in Egypt, “God used only part of His strength. When the final redemption comes, God will show much, much more of His power.”



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The third plague, 'kinim,' is traditionally rendered "lice," yet several medieval sages suggest a broader reading. The 11th-century North African scholar Rabbeinu Chananel identifies kinim as karatzim, blood-sucking creatures "such as ticks," while Rashi's vivid depiction of pests "emerging from dust" and tormenting man and beast mirrors the invasive nature of modern tick infestations. Ibn Ezra and Radak allow kinim to be "small biting insects arising from dust," and Rav Saadiah Gaon literally calls them "tiny creeping things," a term broad enough to include ticks or mites.

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In our era of red carpets and streaming platforms, these tiny pests have claimed a number of celebrity victims. "High-profile individuals such as Justin Timberlake, Bella Hadid, Ben Stiller and Shania Twain have publicly shared their struggles," raising awareness and empathy for this creeping scourge according to People magazine. Timberlake is the latest star to speak out, describing his diagnosis as "debilitating" and joining a growing list of celebrities whose battles remind us that no one is immune.

Hollywood is not exactly renowned for its embrace of biblical values, so perhaps these headlines beckon us toward spiritual introspection. The plagues in Exodus were not mere punishments, they were wake-up calls. Today's tick-borne upswing could similarly prompt us to examine our spiritual health and moral choices. As one rabbi quipped, "The U.S. isn't just entering tick season, we might be entering the Third Plague."

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Whether or not we view this as divine warning, the lesson rings clear: small things matter. And if we ignore the creeping dangers, physical, moral or spiritual, they may soon find their way under our skin.

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