



BAND of BROTHERS

FALL SERIES 2023 – WEEK 4

### Exodus 6:2-10:29: A Battle of Gods & Kings

*Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lies in the midst of his streams, that says, 'My Nile is my own; I made it for myself.'*

– Ezekiel 29:3 ESV

- **Before we begin**
  - We're about to study the ten plagues
  - These biblical events have been...
    - ...greatly debated and disputed
    - ...often doubted and repeatedly debunked
    - ...for believers, proof of God's power
    - ...for atheists, proof of religion's absurdity
  - But it wasn't always this way
  
- **The role of the supernatural**
  - As late as the 16th and 17th centuries, there was widespread belief in the supernatural
  - People embraced the miraculous
  - Even the miracles of the Bible
  - Including the plagues of Exodus
    - The rise of reason
      - The 17th and 18th centuries have been deemed "The Age of Reason"
      - The Enlightenment radically altered the social, religious, and political landscape
      - The scientific revolution promoted reliance upon the natural over the supernatural
      - Philosophy supplanted theology as the way to explain human existence and essence
    - The birth of biblical-historical criticism
      - This shift to rationalism and reason had an impact on biblical interpretation
      - Even theological scholars began to question the veracity and reliability of biblical texts
      - They began to seek natural explanations for the supernatural events in the bible

“...there are some people who get so caught up in historical criticism that they view the text of the Bible as ‘nothing but’ a collection of ancient writings, the mere product of an older, less enlightened culture.”

“As a methodology, historical criticism falsely assumes that the Bible is ‘nothing but’ a collection of man-made writings. This leads to an almost total dismissal of any supernatural, miraculous, or divine activity in the world” – [www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org)

- ~ The ten plagues become natural disasters
- ~ The Red Sea becomes the Reed Sea
- ~ God gets emasculated or simply eliminated
- ~ The entire story of Exodus becomes a fairytale
- ~ The Bible itself become irrelevant
- ~ And it’s redemption story becomes unreliable

“Partisans of ‘enlightenment’ ...claimed that the advance of “philosophie [using reason] would promote an ‘enlightened’ day of happiness, toleration, and progress. Many sharply criticized traditional Christian beliefs such as our sinful nature due to Adam’s Fall, the reality of miracles, the fulfillment of biblical prophecy and the divinity of Christ. They questioned Scripture’s infallibility and endorsed biblical criticism.” – John Woodbridge, “The Rise of Biblical Criticism in the Enlightenment,” [www.thegospelcoalition.org](http://www.thegospelcoalition.org)

“The truths of religion are never so well understood as by those who have lost the power of reason.” – Voltaire

“The main point of enlightenment is man’s release from his self-caused immaturity – primarily in matters of religion.” Immanuel Kant

- **Don’t expunge what you can’t explain**

*But the LORD said to Moses, “Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for with a strong hand he will send them out, and with a strong hand he will drive them out of his land.” – Exodus 6:1 ESV*

- Reason is a gift from God
- It should reveal that truth about God
- But man has used reason to disprove and displace God

*...although they knew God, they neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him, but **they became futile in their thinking** and darkened in their foolish hearts. Although they claimed to be wise, **they became fools**... – Romans 1:21-22 BSB*

- Exodus is a primer on God’s **omnipotence**
  - ~ He’s going to demonstrate His power...  
*...over creation*

...over earthly kings and kingdom  
 ...over false gods  
 ...over the prince of this world

***“I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.”*** – Exodus 6:6 ESV

***“I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God...”*** – Exodus 6:7 ESV

*Moses spoke thus to the people of Israel, but they did not listen to Moses, because of their broken spirit and harsh slavery.* – Exodus 6:9 ESV

- The Israelites were beaten down
  - o They couldn’t see God in their circumstances
  - o They were demoralized
  - o They were disincentivized
  - o They were defeated
- The Israelites were in need of supernatural help

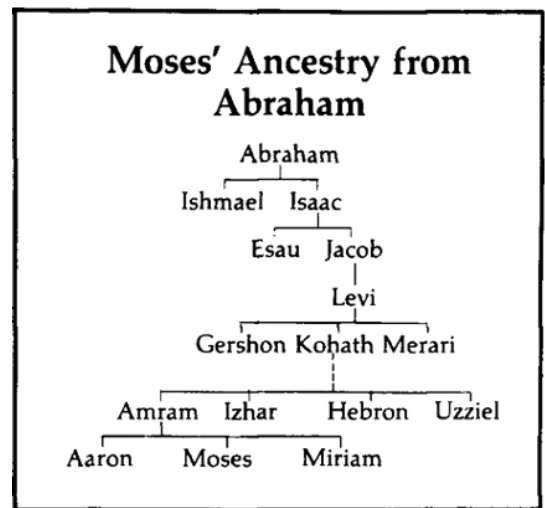
• **God’s octogenarian tag team**

*So the LORD said to Moses, “Go in, tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the people of Israel go out of his land.”* – Exodus 6:10-11 ESV

- These two had been **chosen** and **charged**
  - o They had a God-ordained commission
  - o They had a God-ordained pedigree
  - o Verses 14-25 provide it

*“This direct line back to the patriarch of the Hebrew people provides an essential link to the covenant promises made to Abraham by God.”*

– Ken Miller, Devotionary™ on Exodus



***These are the Aaron and Moses to whom the LORD said: “Bring out the people of Israel from the land of Egypt by their hosts.”*** – Exodus 6:26 ESV

- God would work through these two men
  - o *“when I multiply my signs...”* – vs 3
  - o *“...by great acts of judgment...”* – vs 3
  - o *“...when I stretch out my hand...”* – vs 5
  - o And *“the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord...”* – vs 5

- But remember Pharaoh's initial response  
*"Who is **the Lord** [Yahweh], that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know **the Lord** [Yahweh], and moreover, I will not let Israel go."* – Exodus 5:2 ESV

- **A sign fit for Pharaoh** – Exodus 6:8-13

- Moses is instructed to use his earlier sign
- But God makes a few adjustments

**Exodus 4:1-4**

Midian wilderness  
 Moses' staff  
 Threw it down  
 God brought it to life  
 Became a serpent  
 Moses ran  
 Moses believed

**Exodus 7:8-12**

Pharaoh's court  
 Aaron's staff  
 Threw it down  
 God brought it to life  
 Became a serpent  
 Pharaoh called for more  
 Pharaoh refused to believe

- Not what Moses was expecting
  - In Exodus 4, Moses' staff became a *nāhāš*
  - In Exodus 7, Aaron's staff became a *tannîn*
- Moses uses a completely different word  
*tannîn* – dragon, sea monster
  - The Hebrew word for "crocodile"
  - Why is this significant?
  - What message was God sending?

*Thus says the Lord God:*

*"Behold, I am against you,*

*Pharaoh king of Egypt,*

***the great dragon** [tannîn] that lies*

*in the midst of his streams,*

*that says, 'My Nile is my own;*

*I made it for myself.'" – Ezekiel 29:3 ESV*

**Sobek-Re**

- God of the Nile
- Their creator-god
- Symbol of Pharaoh's potency and power

*Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh's heart is hardened; he refuses to let the people go. 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.**" – Exodus 7:14-15 ESV*

- **God was just beginning**
  - The battle lines were drawn
  - Sobek was no match for God
  - Neither were the other gods of Egypt

“...God is represented in the Bible as revealing Himself in his actions and in his designs...It is in history...that God’s design is mostly to be perceived, and this is how he chooses to reveal himself...ultimately, revelation is in relationship – ‘confrontation’ and communion, rather than by the communication of facts.” – C.F.D. Moule, “Revelation,” *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*

“God was the Lord, King, and Judge of history; the Exodus salvation showed an enduring purpose of God that gave hope in desperate times. God delivered Israel because He was initiating His purpose in history through His people.” – J. Mullenburg, *The Way of Israel*

- **Discussion questions**
  - God can either show up in communion or confrontation. Why would we ever choose the latter, and how do we stop?
  - What are some of the false gods of this world that are powerless before the one true God? Then why do we worry?
  - Why must we cling to our belief in the spiritual and supernatural in a world where reason and rationality rule all?

# THE PLAGUES AGAINST EGYPT

PASSAGE	PLAGUE	WARNING TO PHARAOH	EGYPTIAN GOD(S)	OUTCOME
Exodus 7:14-25	#1 – WATER TO BLOOD	“The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you, saying, ‘Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness.’” – Exodus 7:16 ESV	<b>Hapi</b> - god of the annual Nile flooding <b>Sobek</b> - associated with the crocodile, protector of the Nile <b>Khnum</b> - god of the source of the Nile <b>Anuket</b> - goddess of the annual flooding	Fish died and the water was undrinkable
Exodus 8:1-15	#2 – FROGS	“Thus says the Lord, ‘Let my people go, that they may serve me. But if you refuse to let them go, behold, I will plague all your country with frogs.’” – Exodus 8:1-2 ESV	<b>Heket</b> - goddess of fertility represented as a frog. She was considered the wife of Khnum	Proliferation of frogs and their deaths creating a massive cleanup effort and a stench
Exodus 8:16-19	#3 – STINGING INSECTS	NONE	<b>Serket</b> - goddess of venomous stings and bites <b>Geb</b> - god over the dust of the earth	Small stinging insects infested Egypt and caused great pain to the people
Exodus 8:20-32	#4 – FLIES	“Thus says the Lord, ‘Let my people go, that they may serve me. Or else, if you will not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies on you and your servants and your people, and into your houses.’” – Exodus 8:20-21 ESV	<b>Khepri</b> - god of creation, movement of the Sun, rebirth, personified with the head of a fly	The entire land of Egypt was infested but not the land of Goshen
Exodus 9:1-7	#5 – DEATH OF LIVESTOCK	“Thus says the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, ‘Let my people go, that they may serve me. For if you refuse to let them go and still hold them, behold, the hand of the Lord will fall with a very severe plague upon your livestock that are in the field, the horses, the donkeys, the camels, the herds, and the flocks.’” – Exodus 9:1-3 ESV	<b>Hathor</b> - goddess of love and protection, depicted with the head of a cow <b>Apis</b> - son Hathor who was depicted as a bull	The livestock of the Egyptians died, but those of the Israelites were protected

PASSAGE	PLAGUE	WARNING TO PHARAOH	EGYPTIAN GOD(S)	OUTCOME
Exodus 9:8-12	#6 – BOILS	NONE	<b>Hathor</b> - goddess of love and protection, depicted with the head of a cow <b>Apis</b> - son Hathor who was depicted as a bull	The Egyptian people and livestock were affected but not the Israelites
Exodus 9:13-14	#7 – Hail	<i>“Thus says the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. For this time I will send all my plagues on you yourself,[a] and on your servants and your people, so that you may know that there is none like me in all the earth.” – Exodus 9:13-14 ESV</i>	<b>Nut</b> - goddess of the sky <b>Seth</b> - sgod of the desert, storms, disorder and foreigner	Hail fell in the land of Egypt killing destorying anything or anyone that remained outside. The land of Goshen was spared.
Exodus 10:3-4	#8 – Locusts	<i>“Thus says the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. For this time I will send all my plagues on you yourself,[a] and on your servants and your people, so that you may know that there is none like me in all the earth.” – Exodus 9:13-14 ESV</i>	<b>Neper</b> - god of grain <b>Heneb</b> - god of grain, produce, and vineyards <b>Remenutet</b> - revered as a goddess of nourishment and the harvest, and responsible for protecting the royal office of Pharaoh <b>Isis and Set</b> - gods responsible for the annual harvest	Locusts destroyed any crops that had survived the hail.
Exodus 10:21-29	#9 – Darkness	NONE	<b>Ra</b> - god who controlled the sun and the light and was responsible for the heavens and all power, including that of the Pharaoh	For three days, the entire land of Egypt was plunged into darkness, except in the land of Goshen.
Exodus 11:1-12:32	#10 – Death of the firstborn	NONE	<b>Pharaoh</b> - the perceived man-god who was believed to be the incarnation of Ra, the sun god. He was also the ultimate protector of the people of Egypt	All the firstborn in the land of Egypt died, except those within the homes covered by the blood of the lamb.







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FALL SERIES 2023 – WEEK 5 HOMEWORK

### WEEK 5 – Exodus 11:1-13:16: A Matter of Life & Death

This lesson will cover the final plague and the institution of the first Passover. In this seminal passage, we will look closely at the tie-ins between this Old Testament sacrament and the New Testament celebration of the Lord's Table. We want to explore the whole idea of the doctrine of substitutionary atonement as foreshadowed by the sacrifice of the pascal lambs. God's protection of His people provides a powerful reminder of His grace and mercy. Every Israelite was just as deserving of God's judgment. Their firstborn stood to suffer the same fate as their Egyptian counterparts, and they would have died had God not provided a way of escape.

- Read Exodus 11:1-13:16. What jumps out at you in these passages?
- This week's Devotional™ reading covers pages 105-132, so it is rather long. I would recommend spreading it out over the week.
- In Exodus 11, Moses records God's intention to bring one more plague on the people of Egypt. But before He subjects the Egyptians to this final judgment, what does God command the Israelites to do in verses 1-4?

Read Genesis 15:13-14. What did God predict that He would do centuries earlier? What does this tell us about God's sovereignty, power, and faithfulness?

What does God tell Moses is going to happen that night? How do you think this news struck the Israelites?

- In looking over chapter 12, what do you see as the key commands that God gave the Israelites? List the below.

Look closely at verse 28. Why is this statement so significant? What does it say about the Israelites and what would have happened had they done otherwise?

What do the events recorded in verses 29-32 tell us about our God?

Verses 33-42 tell us what happened next. How do you see the sovereignty of God in these verses?

Look at verse 50. Why is this statement significant? What does it tell us about the spiritual state of the Israelites at that moment and what does it reveal about the character of God?

- Why do you think God ordered the consecration of the firstborn in verse 1 of chapter 13? What could be the message He is sending to His newly emancipated people?

Look back over chapter 13:3-16. What does God tell the Israelites to do to remember this day throughout their generations?

Why is it so important that we remember and celebrate God's deliverance from slavery to sin and their deliverance from the condemnation of death?