

Exodus 7

Exodus 6:28-30 And it came to pass, on the day the LORD spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, (29) that the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "**I am the LORD.** Speak to Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say to you." (30) But Moses said before the LORD, "Behold, I *am* of uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh heed me?"

And with that, the LORD God slapped Moses upside the head so that he would understand the phrase, "I am the LORD". *"I am the LORD of all creation; I am the LORD of Adam and Eve; I am the LORD who brought a great flood upon the earth; I am the LORD who brought Abraham, Isaac and Jacob into Canaan, a land I promised them; I am the LORD who brought Joseph and then the rest of the family to Egypt to save them from famine; I am the LORD who will deliver you and every Hebrew from the cruelty of Pharaoh; I am the LORD;"*

(Exodus 7:1) So the LORD said to Moses: "See, I have made you *as* God to Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother shall be your prophet. (2) You shall speak all that I command you. And Aaron your brother shall tell Pharaoh to send the children of Israel out of his land. (3) **And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt.** (4) But Pharaoh will not heed you, **so that I may lay My hand on Egypt and bring My armies *and* My people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments.** (5) And the Egyptians shall know that **I am the LORD**, when I stretch out My hand on Egypt and bring out the children of Israel from among them."

Once again, Moses is reminded of the "Big Picture". "You will lead My people out of Egypt, and I will judge Pharaoh for what he has done and is doing to My Covenant People". I will do this by great "judgments".

(Exodus 7:6) Then Moses and Aaron did *so*; just as the LORD commanded them, so they did. (7) And Moses *was* eighty years old and Aaron eighty-three years old when they spoke to Pharaoh.

And without another word (Thank God!), Moses and Aaron obeyed God. Moses was eighty and Aaron was eighty-three. That's significant because it means that there's hope for us as well!

(Exodus 7:8) Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, (9) "When Pharaoh speaks to you, saying, 'Show a miracle for yourselves,' then you shall say to Aaron, 'Take your rod and cast *it* before Pharaoh, *and* let it become a serpent.'" (10) So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and they did so, just as the LORD commanded. And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a serpent. (11) But Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers; so the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. (12) For every man threw down his rod, and they became serpents. **But Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods.**

The LORD tells them exactly what they are to do. Aaron is to throw the rod towards Pharaoh, and it will become a serpent. This isn't the same word in the Hebrew as the Garden serpent. This word, at least in the KJV, is most often translated "dragon". It's never translated "dragon" in the. But most translate the word as "serpent".

But Pharaoh, believing he is god, has his wise men, sorcerers and magicians do the same.

But our God's serpent swallowed up all their serpents.

Question: If God could transform a rod into a serpent, how could these pagans?

Enchantments - The original Hebrew implies a deceptive appearance, an **illusion**, a juggler's trick, not an actual putting forth of magic power. Pharaoh may or may not have believed in a real transformation; but in either case he would naturally consider that if the sign performed by Aaron differed from that of the magicians, it was just a simple matter of degree of the same "magic arts".

Some additional notes:

Three names for the **magicians** of Egypt are given in this verse. The magicians were both "wise men" who know occult arts or "sorcerers" who "mutter magic spells," especially when driving away crocodiles, snakes, asps, etc. It was natural that Pharaoh should have sent for such persons.

BTW: The names of the two principal magicians, Jannes and Jambes, who "withstood Moses," are preserved in the Targum of Jonathan (an Aramaic paraphrase of the Torah) The Apostle Paul spoke of them in his second letter to Timothy when he wrote to him concerning the "**last days**" and how people will behave:

2 Timothy 3:7-9 always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. (8) Now as **Jannes** and **Jambres** resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; (9) but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was.

Had Pharaoh's heart been open to the conviction of the Holy Spirit, he would have been convinced of the LORD's True power when Aaron's serpent swallowed up all the Egyptian serpents.

(Exodus 7:13) **And Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them,** as the LORD had said. (14) So the LORD said to Moses: "**Pharaoh's heart *is* hard; he refuses to let the people go. (15)** Go to Pharaoh in the morning, when he goes out to the water, and you shall stand by the river's bank to meet him; and the rod which was turned to a serpent you shall take in your hand. (16) And you shall say to him, 'The LORD God of the Hebrews has sent me to you, saying, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me in the wilderness"; but indeed, until now you would not hear! (17) **Thus says the LORD: "By this you shall know that I *am* the LORD. Behold, I will strike the waters which *are* in the river with the rod that *is* in my hand, and they shall be turned to blood. (18) And the fish that *are* in the river shall die, the river shall stink, and the Egyptians will loathe to drink the water of the river."** ' ' "

Because the king refused the LORD's command, the FIRST PLAGUE is given. The LORD knew that Pharaoh would go to the River in the morning, so he tells the brothers to meet him there. They were to tell him to let the LORD's people go into the wilderness to "serve" Him, that is, worship and bring sacrifices to Him. If Pharaoh refused, the Nile would be turned into blood. It would become a stench as the fish died and no one could draw water from it to drink or use otherwise.

(19) Then the LORD spoke to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Take your rod and **stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their streams, over their rivers, over their ponds, and over all their pools of water, that they may become blood. And there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in *buckets of wood and pitchers of stone.*' "** (20) And Moses and Aaron did so, just as the LORD commanded. So he lifted up the rod and struck the waters that *were* in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants. **And all the waters that *were* in the river were turned to blood.** (21) The fish that *were* in the river died, the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink the water of the river. So there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.

Of course, hard-hearted-harry refused. Aaron stretched out his hand that held the rod over the Nile. The Nile and all its tributaries and all the ponds which were fed by those waters turned to blood. Even pools of water that formed from rain or other irrigation turned to blood. And to make the mighty power of the LORD God totally understood, water that was already in pots and cisterns turned to blood as well. This occurred all over the Land of Egypt!

(Exodus 7:22) **Then the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments; and Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, as the LORD had said.** (23) And Pharaoh turned and went into his house. Neither was his heart moved by this. (24) So all the Egyptians dug all around the river for water to drink, because they could not drink the water of the river. (25) And seven days passed after the LORD had struck the river.

The Egyptians were able to replicate the plague such that Pharaoh did not listen and still refused to let them go. He simply withdrew to his house.

The plague lasted 7 days. At that time, the LORD returned the waters back to their original state. Seven days of digging around to try to find water to drink. Pharaoh's heart was so hard, that he never even asked Moses to remove the plague! Not even for the sake of all his people! Had he humbled himself just a little, Moses would have interceded on his behalf. But that is not the way of a stony heart. All the king could feel is anger over his impotence to rectify the situation.

There's an interesting verse in Job regarding men like Pharaoh:

Job 36:13 "But the hypocrites in heart store up wrath; They do not cry for help when He binds them.

The LORD certainly bound up the hard heart of Pharaoh. But remember, Pharaoh still had the free-will to act with compassion for those he ruled over. God's infinite mercy provided an escape from this first plague: just let My people go! But Pharaoh decided to continue to worship Hapi - Egyptian God of the Nile; perhaps he thought that Hapi would restore the water. But he did not and if Pharaoh prayed or sacrificed to this so-called god, he did not answer. It would be seven days before the LORD God, creator of heaven and earth and all they contain, restored the Nile and all the water of Egypt. Perhaps Pharaoh gave his god credit for it. Such is the heart of a stubborn man!

But there is a fount of blood from the One that was slain before the foundations of the earth were laid. This blood saves – for it is the Blood of the Lamb of God. It flowed out of His body, along with **water** when He was judged on the Cross for our sins.

And, there will be yet another plague of blood for those whose hearts are hardened to the One Who is Truth:

Revelation 16:3-6 Then the **second** angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it became blood as of a dead *man*; and every living creature in the sea died. (4) Then the **third** angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. (5) And I heard the angel of the waters saying: "You are righteous, O Lord, The One who is and who was and who is to be, Because You have judged these things. (6) For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, And You have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due."

This plague was not confined to a nation but was poured out into the waters of the seas and every river and spring.

Jeremiah 17:9-10 "The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, And desperately wicked; **Who can know it?** (10) I, the LORD, search the heart, / test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings. (desperately wicked: sick!)

Therefore, the next PLAGUE came.

(Exodus 8:1) And the LORD spoke to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD: "Let My people go, that they may serve Me. (2) But if you refuse to let *them* go, behold, I will smite all your territory with frogs. (3) So the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into your house, into your bedroom, on your bed, into the houses of your servants, on your people, into your ovens, and into your kneading bowls. (4) And the frogs shall come up on you, on your people, and on all your servants." ' ' "

The next plague was a abundant mess of frogs. The Egyptians worshipped "Heket" or "Heqt". This goddess was always depicted with a head of a frog. She was a goddess of fertility and water (frogs reproduced rapidly). Because of this, it was forbidden to kill a frog. Think of the sense-of-humor of God: "You worship frogs? Well, here you go....worship away!".

Not only will the frogs leave the Nile, but they will come into the houses, bedrooms, ovens and kneading bowls of Pharaoh, his servants, and the people of Egypt.

(Exodus 8:5) Then the LORD spoke to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your hand with your rod over the streams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and cause frogs to come up on 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. (7) And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs on the land of Egypt.

So, Moses and Aaron have come to Pharaoh and warned him about the plague of frogs. Once again, he has refused to let the people go (this is implied from the fact that the plague occurred). And up from the streams, rivers, and ponds came a hoard of frogs!

Once again, the magicians did the same. But could they remove their sacred frogs?

(Exodus 8:8) Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, "Entreat 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 sacrifice to the LORD."

This time Pharaoh asks Moses to pray to his LORD to take away the frog from himself and the people. In return, the king will let the Hebrews go.

(Exodus 8:9) And Moses said to Pharaoh, "Accept the honor of saying when I shall intercede for you, for your servants, and for your people, to destroy the frogs from you and your houses, *that* they may remain in the river only."

Moses tells Pharaoh to "please command me as to when I shall pray, to intercede on his behalf and for the people".

(Exodus 8:10) So he said, "Tomorrow." And he said, "*Let it be* according to your word, that you may know that *there is* no one like the LORD our God. (11) And the frogs shall depart from you, from your houses, from your servants, and from your people. They shall remain in the river only."

Moses wants Pharaoh to know that God is so powerful, he could name the day and it will be done. Pharaoh, perhaps thinking to test the LORD in this manner, says "Tomorrow".

Moses responds to the challenge with the truth that "there is no one like the LORD our God.

(Exodus 8:12) Then Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh. And Moses cried out to the LORD concerning the frogs which He had brought against Pharaoh. (13) So the LORD did according to the word of Moses. And the frogs died out of the houses, out of the courtyards, and out of the fields. (14) They gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank.

The prayer was to destroy the frogs. And that's exactly what the LORD did. If Pharaoh has been a smart man, he could have asked that the frogs should return to the rivers. But he wasn't a smart man and therefore, the Egyptians had a mess on their hands. Their "frog-goddess" laid dead in heaps of stinking flesh. And, another god bites the dust.

(Exodus 8:15) But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and did not heed them, as the LORD had said.

What will it take for Pharaoh to yield his will to the God of Creation? Oh, about 8 more plagues.

The hard and stony heart has been an issue since the Fall. Cain killed Abel and spoke rudely to his LORD. Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt because her heart was fixed like stone on Sodom. And throughout the Scriptures we know that the prophets were killed because of the Words of God spoken to wicked men who refused the offer of grace and mercy because of their hearts of stone.

What can God do with such utter hardness?

Romans 1:18-32 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and

unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, (19) because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown *it* to them. (20) For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, (21) because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. (22) Professing to be wise, they became fools, (23) and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. (24) Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, (25) who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. (26) For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. (27) Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. (28) And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; (29) being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; *they are* whisperers, (30) backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, (31) undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; (32) who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

Woe to the hard of heart who cling tenaciously to the world and lust after its pleasures, instead of renouncing the self-life to come the source of all Life – Messiah Jesus.