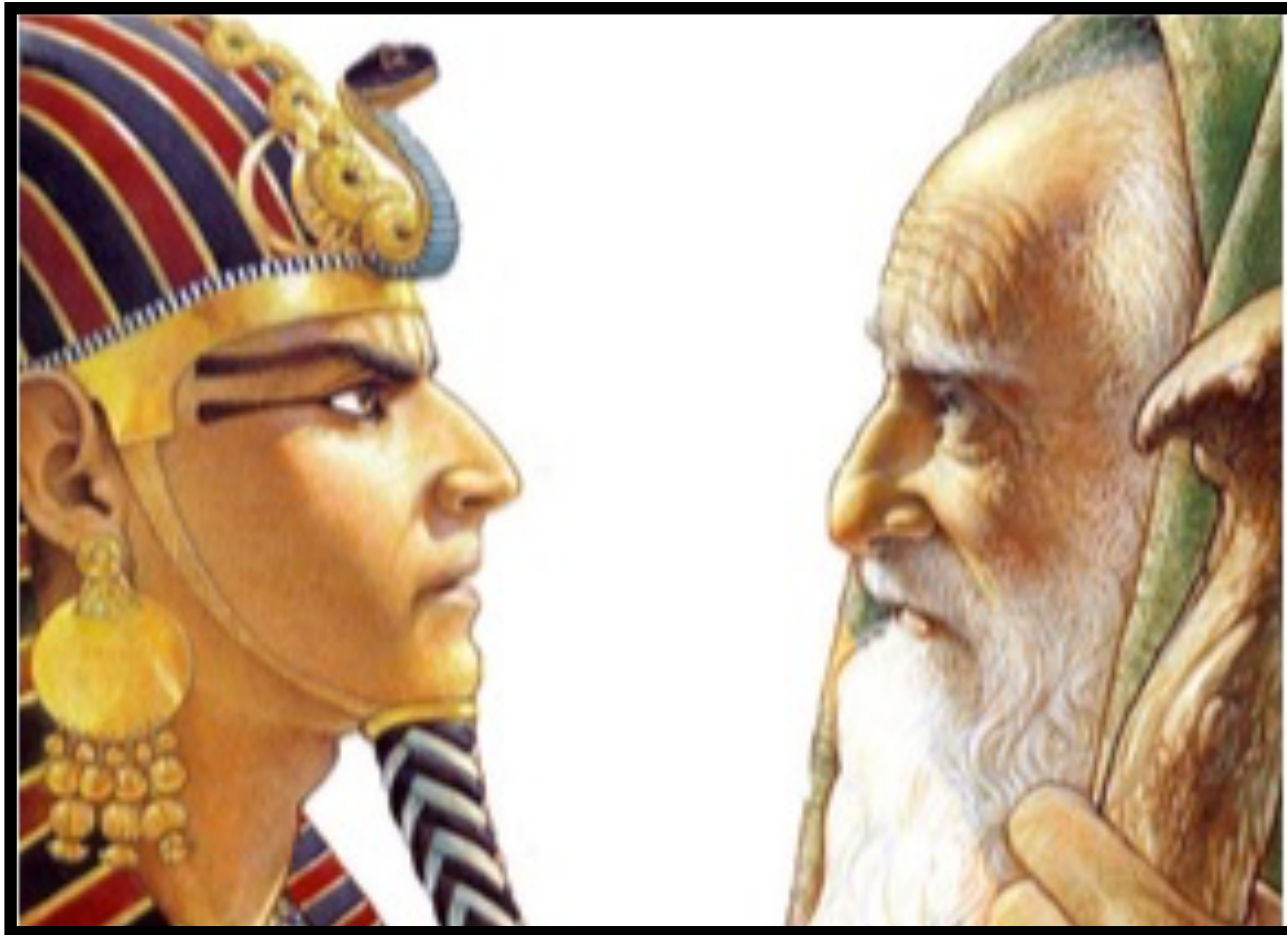


VA'ERA - EXODUS

-And I Appeared-

Dan Stolebarger - Holy Ground Explorations
Chapters 6:2 - 9:35

INTRODUCTION



PARASHAT VA'ERA - 'And I Appeared'

INTRO

*So we have “showdown” between the kingdom of man and the kingdom of God beginning.

*Moses’ speech impediment: According to midrash, God did not cure Moses of his stuttering since He wanted Israel to know that he was a divine messenger. When he spoke in the Name of the LORD, the stuttering entirely disappeared and Moses spoke with fluent ease. This was to teach the people not to trust in human oratory or wisdom, but rather in the power of God....

*Rabbinic midrash portrays the book of Exodus as an engagement arrangement between God, the groom, and Israel his bride, with the Torah serving as the wedding document and Shabbat serving as the engagement ring.

*One thing to watch throughout the rest of this chapter is the change of Moses’ style, remember that Moses was timid and frightened, but here we see him being strong. This reminds us of the amazing transformation of Peter, where through the Gospels he is always sticking his foot in his mouth, speaking too quickly; but from Acts 2 on, Peter delivers remarkable sermons.

*How is Free Will impacted when it says that God hardened Pharaoh’s heart?

PLAGUES

The Ten Plagues consisted of three sets of three each followed by the Plague of the Firstborn. The three sets of plagues were intended to establish three eternal principles for all time.

The first three plagues PROVED the existence of HaShem (7:17); the next three proved that His providence extend to earthly affairs and that He is not oblivious to material matters (8:18), and the next three proved that God is unmatched by any power (9:14).

PLAGUES

1. Hapi- Egyptian God of the Nile

This Egyptian God was a water bearer

Egyptian Plague- Water Turned to Blood

2. Heket- Egyptian Goddess of Fertility, Water, Renewal

Heket the Egyptian Goddess, had the head of a frog.

Egyptian Plague- Frogs coming from the Nile River

3. Geb- Egyptian God of the Earth

The Egyptian God Geb, was over the dust of the earth.

Egyptian Plague- Lice from the dust of the earth

4. Khepri- Egyptian Lord of flies or beetles

Khepri, the Egyptian god had the head of a fly.

5. Apis- Egyptian Plague- Goddess of animals

Hathor-Egyptian Goddess of Love and Protection

Usually this Egyptian Goddess was depicted with the head of a cow.

6. Isis- Egyptian Plague- Death of Cattle and Livestock

Isis- Egyptian Goddess of Medicine and Peace Egyptian Plague- Ashes turned to Boils and Sores

7. Nut- Egyptian Goddess of the Sky

Egyptian Plague- Hail rained down in the form of fire

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² God spoke to Moses, and said to him, "I am Yahweh. ³ I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as **God Almighty** (El Shaddai); but by my name Yahweh I was not known to them. ⁴ I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their travels, in which they lived as aliens. ⁵ Moreover I have heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage, and I have remembered my covenant. ⁶ Therefore tell the children of Israel, 'I am Yahweh, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and **I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm, and with great judgments. ⁷ I will take you to myself for a people. I will be your God; (four cups of Passover)** and you shall know that I am Yahweh your God, who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. ⁸ **I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it to you for a heritage: I am Yahweh.**'"

NOTE that the promises God made to Israel are **unconditional**. If they are unconditional, there is no way the she can forfeit her promises, no matter how idolatrous she became, no matter how unfaithful, God's Hand was (is) upon Israel. He will redeem them here in Exodus, and He will cure them of idolatry under Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian captivity. And the story continues ...



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

Sharon Stolebarger - Have you been here before? Have you lived with a broken spirit, crushed to the very core? Have you lived under slavery that just beats you down and you are almost afraid to look up? Does this sound melodramatic to you? It is - but I have. This is what the Lord brought me out of and placed my feet on solid ground. This is why I can say that I serve God for WHO He is and not for WHAT He can do for me.

7

Yahweh said to Moses, "Behold, 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 speak to Pharaoh, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land. ³ **I will harden Pharaoh's heart**, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt.

Remember that God is outside time and knows what we will choose, therefore this gives him fore-knowledge of what we see as the future.

God hardened Pharaoh's heart but **only after the despot had already hardened it by refusing the message of the first five plagues** (Exodus 7:22, 8:15, 8:19, 8:32, 9:7). After the 6th plague, however, the Torah reads, "And the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart" (Exodus 9:12). One sin leads to another. **If someone repeatedly refuses to submit to God, the Lord may ratify the decision and prevent repentance (see Paul in Romans 9:17-ff).**

7

⁸ Yahweh spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, ⁹ "When Pharaoh speaks to you, saying, 'Perform a miracle!' then you shall tell Aaron, 'Take your rod, and cast it down before Pharaoh, and it will become a serpent.'"

¹⁰ Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and they did so, as Yahweh had commanded. Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a serpent. ¹¹ Then Pharaoh also called for the wise men and the sorcerers.

They also, the magicians of Egypt, did the same thing with their enchantments.

¹² **For they each cast down their rods, and they became serpents; but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods.** ¹³ Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he didn't listen to them, as Yahweh had spoken.

This serpent was a symbol of Pharaoh, and when Aaron grasped it again, it would revert to being a wooden staff. This was meant to illustrate that though Pharaoh seems like a deadly viper, when you grasp him, he is like a lifeless wooden stick. The midrash says, "the first sign will be the staff, to show that I will beat him like a dog."



We get an insight here to the goal of the one that is their commander, in a model sense Pharaoh, or in a spiritual sense, Satan. His goal was that they would withstand Moses. How? By imitation! Remember Matthew 13, and the Parable of the Tares in the Wheat, the field is the world, the seed is the Word of God, the enemy sows tares which look like wheat when they are young. Notice the ambition of the enemy, to create a counterfeit. Here before Pharaoh, they create a counterfeit, serpents like Moses did. God has a supremacy because Moses' serpent swallows the other two. The serpent turns back into a rod for Moses.

7

¹⁹ Yahweh said to Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'Take your rod, and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, over their streams, and over their pools, and over all their ponds of water, **that they may become blood.** There will be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.'"

²⁰ Moses and Aaron did so, as Yahweh commanded; and 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 became foul. The Egyptians couldn't drink water from the river. **The blood was throughout all the land of Egypt.** ²² **The magicians of Egypt did the same thing with their enchantments.** So Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he didn't listen to them, as Yahweh had spoken. ²³ Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and he didn't even take this to heart.

The Israel Bible explains that the Nile is targeted for the first two plagues, blood and frogs, because it was the lifeblood of the Egyptian economy. Unlike Israel, which relies on rain for water and sustenance, Egypt depends on the Nile for its water (see Deuteronomy 11).



1-2 See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet. You shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall tell Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go out of his land.

Andrew Suedkamp - I'd like to share the following, it's from Brad Gray's book "Make your Mark,": *"Over fifteen hundred gods and goddesses have been identified in connection with Egyptian worship. With gods and goddesses come temples and priesthoods, something the Israelites understood well after having been engrossed in this culture for such a long time. They knew how the religious system worked. When you went to offer your worship to a god at his temple, you wouldn't meet with the god. The god was off limits. So what did you do? You met with one of the priests. Why? Because the priest mediated to the people on the god's behalf. They stood in the gap between the god and the worshipper. And they did so as the god's chosen ambassador, authorized to act on the god's behalf, and therefore functioned as the physical hands and feet of the god. Priests were seen as the best human representation of what the god was like. So when you met with a priest, it was as if you were meeting with the god himself. This was the essence of what it meant to be a priest in the ancient world.....the priest was the medium through which the message of the god was communicated to the world, and it was in the behavior of the priest that the message of the god was encountered by others. Being a priest in the ancient world was a calling that carried with it colossal implications. And the living God of the universe says to the Israelites at Sinai, "I want you to be that for me. I want you to be my priests. I want you to stand in the gap between me and the rest of the world. I want you to serve as my hands and feet in the world, as my authorized ambassadors. I want you to live your lives in such a way that when the world interacts with you, it's as if they are interacting with me!" In short, "I want you to be my message!" What a staggering declaration. At this moment, Israel receives her fundamental identity and calling as the people of God. As a kingdom of priests, they are to be the medium through which the world encounters the message of God. Their very lives will communicate to the world what God is like. They are to put God on display by what they say; how they live; how they treat their families, their friends, strangers they encounter—no matter who it is, they are to be like God to them. Everything they do is to point the way for others to see what God is like."* Likewise, that is our charge as well! We are to be His representatives to everyone we encounter.

Yahweh spoke to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh, and tell him, 'This is what Yahweh says, "Let my people go, that they may serve me. ² If you refuse to let them go, behold, **I will plague all your borders with frogs.** ³ The river will swarm with frogs, which will go up and come into your house, and into your bedroom, and on your bed, and into the house of your servants, and on your people, and into your ovens, and into your kneading troughs. ⁴ The frogs shall come up both on you, and on your people, and on all your servants.'"" ⁵ Yahweh said to Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'Stretch out your hand with your rod over the rivers, over the streams, and over the pools, and cause frogs to come up on the land of Egypt.'" ⁶ **Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs came up, and covered the land of Egypt.** ⁷ **The magicians did the same thing with their enchantments, and brought up frogs on the land of Egypt.** (It is interesting that the magicians could increase the frogs, but couldn't make them go away.) ⁸ Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, "Entreat Yahweh, that he take away the frogs from me and from my people; **and I will let the people go**, that they may sacrifice to Yahweh."

8

¹² Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh, and Moses cried to Yahweh concerning the frogs which he had brought on Pharaoh. ¹³ Yahweh did according to the word of Moses, and the frogs died out of the houses, out of the courts, and out of the fields. ¹⁴ They gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank. ¹⁵ **But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart**, and didn't listen to them, as Yahweh had spoken.

8

¹⁶ Yahweh said to Moses, **“Tell Aaron, ‘Stretch out your rod, and strike the dust of the earth, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.’”** ¹⁷ They did so; and Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and struck the dust of the earth, and there were lice on man, and on animal; all the dust of the earth became lice throughout all the land of Egypt. ¹⁸ **The magicians tried with their enchantments to produce lice, but they couldn’t. There were lice on man, and on animal.** ¹⁹ **Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, “This is God’s finger;”** but Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he didn’t listen to them, as Yahweh had spoken.

What is so unique about lice? Herodotus gives us a clue: the priests of the Egyptian system had a big thing about cleanliness, they wore special linen garments, they shaved their head every third day. In order for them to worship according to their system, they had to be totally clean. The infestation of the lice made it impossible for them to worship.

Where did the lice come from? The dust (see John 8 with Jesus and the woman caught in adultery, when her accusers approach Christ bends down and writes in the dust, the finger of God).

8

²⁰ Yahweh said to Moses, **“Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh; behold, he comes out to the water; and tell him, ‘This is what Yahweh says, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. ²¹ Else, if you will 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. The houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground they are on. ²² **I will set apart in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there,** to the end you may know that I am Yahweh on the earth. ²³ I will put a division between my people and your people. This sign shall happen by tomorrow.”” ²⁴ Yahweh did so; and there came grievous swarms of flies into the house of Pharaoh, and into his servants’ houses. In all the land of Egypt the land was corrupted by reason of the swarms of flies.

²⁵ Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, “Go, sacrifice to your God in the land!”

Who is the Lord of the Flies? Beelzebub means ‘lord of the flies.’ Beelzebub is a title of Satan or certainly his key leaders.

8

1-4: 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. But if you refuse to let them go, behold, I will smite all your territory with frogs. 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. And the frogs shall come up on you, on your people, and on all your servants." ' "

Glen - The plagues on Egypt wasn't just Yahweh bringing forth increasingly worse 'annoyances' to the Egyptians, it's bigger than that. The Egyptians weren't postmodern agnostic scholars as suggested in the movie 'Gods and Kings' with Christian Bale a few years ago, the Egyptians were highly superstitious and believed in over fifteen hundred gods and goddesses as Andrew pointed out yesterday. Behind each idol was an occult power linked to a fallen angel or demon which gave at least some power to the Egyptian priests. Yahweh was proclaiming His power over the Egyptian 'gods' and their priests showing that the priests didn't have enough authority and power over the Egyptian gods to remove the plagues. We can look at this as spiritual warfare playing out in our dimension. It shows that the God we serve has power over all other 'gods'.

9

Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh, and tell him, 'This is what Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews, says: "Let my people go, that they may serve me. ² For if you refuse to let them go, and hold them still, ³ behold, **Yahweh's hand is on your livestock which are in the field, on the horses, on the donkeys, on the camels, on the herds, and on the flocks with a very grievous pestilence.** ⁴ Yahweh will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt; and nothing shall die of all that belongs to the children of Israel.

But the heart of Pharaoh was stubborn, and he didn't let the people go.

This plague destroyed much of the economy of Egypt as well as its military preparedness

9

8 Yahweh said to Moses and to Aaron, "Take handfuls of ashes of the furnace, and let Moses sprinkle it toward the sky in the sight of Pharaoh. 9 It shall become small dust over all the land of Egypt, **and shall be boils and blisters breaking out on man and on animal, throughout all the land of Egypt.**"

10 They took ashes of the furnace, and stood before Pharaoh; and Moses sprinkled it up toward the sky; and it became boils and blisters breaking out on man and on animal. 11 The magicians couldn't stand before Moses because of the boils; for the boils were on the magicians and on all the Egyptians. 12 **Yahweh hardened the heart of Pharaoh**, and he didn't listen to them, as Yahweh had spoken to Moses.

This is the second plague to arrive with no warning (see 7:15)

With this sixth plague a new phenomenon began. Pharaoh's personal stubbornness was broken and he would have freed the people, but God strengthened his resolve so that he could still be punished for his earlier sins.

²² Yahweh said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky, that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt, on man, and on animal, and on every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt."

²³ Moses stretched out his rod toward the heavens, and Yahweh sent thunder and hail; and lightning flashed down to the earth. Yahweh rained hail on the land of Egypt. ²⁴ **So there was very severe hail, and lightning mixed with the hail, such as had not been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.**

According to midrash, each huge hailstone contained burning fire so that they resembled stars falling from heaven. Compare this to Yeshua's description of the Great Tribulation in Matthew 24:29.

9

²⁷ Pharaoh sent and called for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "I have sinned this time. Yahweh is righteous, and I and my people are wicked. ²⁸ Pray to Yahweh; for there has been enough of mighty thunderings and hail. I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer."

³⁴ **When Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders had ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants.** ³⁵ **The heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he didn't let the children of Israel go,** just as Yahweh had spoken through Moses.



As if a Biblical plague of hail was not enough, a massive dust storm engulfed the town of Narromine, some 250 miles northwest of Sydney. The 186-mile wide cloud of red dust was carried by wind gusts up to 66 miles per hour. The huge storm quickly plunged the area into darkness so complete the weather service described it as "Day turns into night!".

9

15 For *if* by now I had put forth My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, you would then have been cut off from the earth. **16** But, indeed, for this reason I have allowed you to remain, in order to show you My power and in order to proclaim My name through all the earth. **17** Still you exalt yourself against My people by not letting them go.

Troy Anderson – This is the way it is to this day. Through Jesus we are reconciled to God but only because God let us remain while we were still in the dark. And for this reason He also leaves us in this world to proclaim His name through all the earth. Still most people around us exalt themselves against Him and His people but we must remain, consistently proclaiming His name.