

Exodus Chapter 7 Continued

Verses 7:14 – 10:29: The obvious miraculous nature of the 10 plagues; cannot be explained by identifying them with natural occurrences to which Moses then applied a theological interpretation. The specific prediction of, as well as the intensity of, each plague moved it beyond being normal, natural phenomena. The notification of the specific discriminatory nature of some of the plagues, distinguishing between Hebrew and Egyptian (8:23; 9:4, 6; 10:23); or Goshen and the rest of the land (8:22; 9:26), as they did; also marks the supernatural nature of these events.

Exodus 7:13 "And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said."

This is a miss-translation. The verb is intransitive, and "Pharaoh's heart" is its nominative case. Translate, "Pharaoh's heart hardened itself." It is essential to the idea of a final penal hardening that in the earlier stages Pharaoh should have been left to himself.

Or, "notwithstanding the heart of Pharaoh was hardened"; though he saw the rods of his magicians devoured by Moses rod; or "therefore" his heart was hardened, because he saw that the rods of his magicians became serpents as well as Aaron's; in which there was a deception of sight. And which was suffered for the hardening of his heart, there being other wonders and miracles to be wrought, for showing forth the divine power, before Israel must be let go:

"That he hearkened not unto them": To Moses and Aaron, and comply with their demand, to dismiss the people of Israel.

"As the LORD had said": or foretold he would not.

Verses 14-25: Notice in verse 14 God's omniscience as He says that the heart of Pharaoh is hardened and also Pharaoh's personal response: "he refuseth to let the people go": Although there were 10 plagues in all, the tenth is climactic and is described at greater length in 11:1-12:30.

The 10 plagues, which would each include natural phenomena out of natural order, would destroy the emotional and economic stability of Egypt and devastate the land. ultimately pointing to Israel's God as the true Sustainer and Lord of creation.

There were several purposes of the plagues:

- (1) The Lord sent the plagues to judge Egypt and her gods (Exodus 7:4; 10:2; 12:12; 18:11), and many plagues seem to be directed against specific Egyptian deities.
- (2) They were also used by God to compel the Pharaoh to free the Israelites (7:4; 18:10).

(3) They were sent to prove once and for all that God Himself is the only sovereign Lord of nature and history (7:5; 9:14-15; 10:2; 18:11).

(4) The plagues struck the land of Goshen selectively, making a distinction between Egypt and Israel and demonstrating that the Israelites were God's chosen people, who come under His protective care (8:22-23; 11:7; 12:27).

(5) Finally, the plagues displayed God's almighty power and proclaimed His holy name (9:16).

The effects of the first miracle (verse 21), seem to prove that the blood was real, as it shall be also under the second trumpet and their drinking water. The Egyptians suffered the extreme indignity of seeing the gods of the Nile made loathsome before their very eyes.

Exodus 7:14 "And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart [is] hardened, he refuseth to let the people go."

Or "heavy", dull and stupid, stiff and inflexible, cannot lift up his heart, or find in his heart to obey the will of God.

"He refuseth to let the people go": Which was an instance and proof of the hardness and heaviness of his heart. On which the above miracle had made no impression, to regard what God by his ambassadors had required of him.

Here we see, even though Moses' serpent had swallowed up all the other serpents, Pharaoh did not really take notice of this being a special miracle. He saw that his magicians had turned their rods into serpents, not even realizing that the miracle shown, was that God can easily overcome the devil and his crowd. God was more powerful than all the magicians in Egypt.

Verses 15-25: Pharaoh would go the "river's bank" (8:20), not to drink but to pay homage, for the Nile River was worshiped as a god. So it is no coincidence that the first plague on the Egyptians was direct against the false god of the Nile.

Exodus 7:15 "Get thee unto Pharaoh in the morning; lo, he goeth out unto the water; and thou shalt stand by the river's brink against he come; and the rod which was turned to a serpent shalt thou take in thine hand."

"In the morning": Apparently, Pharaoh habitually went to the river for washing or, more likely, for the performance of some religious rite. Three times Moses would meet him at this early morning rendezvous to warn of plagues, i.e., the first, fourth, and seventh (8:20; 9:13).

"By the river's brink": the first confrontation of the plague cycle took place on the banks of the Nile, the sacred waterway of the land, whose annual ebb and flow contributed strategically and vitally to the agricultural richness of Egypt. Hymns of thanksgiving were often sung for the blessings brought by the Nile, the country's greatest, single economic resource.

We should understand that in Egypt, the water of the Nile was god to these people. It seems as though this was some sort of ceremonial thing that the Pharaoh did every morning, or at least at some specified time. He could have been there just to bathe, but I believe this Scripture implied some ceremony took place. God was aware of just when he (Pharaoh), would be there and God saw to it that that would be the very time Moses would be there as well.

Exodus 7:16 "And thou shalt say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath sent me unto thee, saying, Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness: and, behold, hitherto thou wouldest not hear."

What they shall say upon meeting him.

"The Lord God of the Hebrews hath sent me unto thee": Still appearing in the character of the ambassador of Jehovah, the God of the children of Israel.

"Saying, let my people go": That they may serve me in the wilderness; the demand is once more renewed, before any punishment is inflicted for refusal, that the patience and forbearance of God might be the more visible. And his judgments appear the more righteous when inflicted, as well as Pharaoh be left more inexcusable. The reason of the demand is observed.

"That they may serve me": Keep a feast, and sacrifice to him, as is before expressed and the place where is pointed at.

"In the wilderness": At Sinai, in Arabia, where the mountains of Sinai and Horeb were. But the time of their service is not here expressed, as elsewhere, namely, three days.

"And, behold, hitherto thou wouldest not hear": And obey the voice of the Lord, upbraiding him with his disobedience, and the hardness of his heart. But signifying it was not now too late, though it was advisable to be quick, or the blow would be given, and the plagues inflicted.

Moses had to approach the Pharaoh again. This time it appeared that Moses had cooled his fears of Pharaoh and was just willing to please God. God told him (Moses), to walk right up to Pharaoh and say "you didn't listen last time, but you must listen now. Let my people go."

Exodus 7:17 "Thus saith the LORD, In this thou shalt know that I [am] the LORD: behold, I will smite with the rod that [is] in mine hand upon the waters which [are] in the river, and they shall be turned to blood."

"Blood": The Hebrew word does not denote red coloring such as might be seen when red clay is washed downstream, but denotes actual substance, i.e., blood.

You see, the blood defeats the enemy. The shed blood of Jesus defeats the enemy every time. This was a battle between Egypt's god and the true God. The true God applied the blood to discredit the false god of the Nile. We see here, in the physical, the putrid Nile. This was real blood, it was not just discolored but was undrinkable; and as we see in the next Scripture,

actually killed the fish. Since fish from the Nile were one of the main items of the Egyptian's diet, this brought a double curse. Remember this was the hand of God bringing this curse.

Exodus 7:18 "And the fish that [is] in the river shall die, and the river shall stink; and the Egyptians shall loathe to drink of the water of the river."

Their elements being so radically changed and they were not able to live in any other but water.

"And the river shall stink": With the blood, into which it should be congealed, and with the putrefied bodies of fishes floating in it.

The water of the Nile has always been regarded by the Egyptians as a blessing unique to their land. It is the only pure and wholesome water in their country, since the water in wells and cisterns is unwholesome, while rain water seldom falls, and fountains are extremely rare.

We will read (in verse 24), that the water was so bad, they could not drink it. This was not just red, muddy water; this was BLOOD.

Exodus 7:19 "And the LORD spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and stretch out thine hand upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all their pools of water, that they may become blood; and [that] there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in [vessels of] wood, and in [vessels of] stone."

The use of different words, "waters, streams, rivers, pools and reservoirs," indicates graphically the extent of the plague. Even buckets of wood and stone filled with water and kept inside the homes could not escape the curse of their contents being turned into blood.

This miracle of God was so vast. I do not believe that Moses or Aaron went and stretched the rod over each of these things mentioned. I believe the miracle occurred when Moses handed Aaron his rod and the rod was stretched over the Nile River.

It was certainly appropriate that this first judgment would be against the Nile, since the Hebrew boys were thrown into the Nile to die. We see God's punishment was terrible. There would be no water at all to drink, until this terrible punishment had ended. This punishment not only touched the Pharaoh but all of his people. We see from this Nile being turned to blood, that the real God had struck out at this false god and Jehovah (The existing everlasting One), had overcome.

Exodus 7:20 "And Moses and Aaron did so, as the LORD commanded; and he lifted up the rod, and smote 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."

Moses delivered the rod to Aaron, who took it and went to the water side.

"And he lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that were in the river": Or "in that river", the river Nile, on the bank of which Pharaoh then stood:

If the occasion was one of a Nile festival, Pharaoh would have “gone out to the water” (Exodus 7:15), accompanied by all the great officers of the Court, and by a large body of the priests and vast numbers of the people. If it was a mere occasion of bodily ablution, he would have had with him a pretty numerous train of attendants. In either case, considerable publicity was given to the miracle, which was certainly not “done in a corner.”

It did not just look like blood, it was blood. We see that there was no argument from Moses and Aaron. They did just as God had commanded them. This was Moses' rod that God had given him in the wilderness. It was very important that they did this in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he would know where this was coming from. It was also, important that Pharaoh was not the only one present, so that Pharaoh could not deny this was the hand of God. There were witnesses, so Pharaoh could not say this blood was from any other cause. Just as God had said, it turned to blood.

Exodus 7:21 "And the fish that [was] in the river died; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river; and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt."

The Egyptians subsisted to a great extent on the fish of the Nile, though salt-water fish were regarded as impure. The mortality among the fish was a plague that was much dreaded.

Previously they had “loathed to drink” (Exodus 7:18), but apparently had drunk. Now they could do so no longer as the draught was too nauseous.

Which was a full proof that the conversion of it into blood was real; for had it been only in appearance, or the water of the river had only the color of blood, and looked like it, but was not really so, it would not have affected the fishes, they would have lived as well as before.

This plague was a greater affliction to the Egyptians, not as it affected their drink but their food, the fish (Num. 11:5), being what the common people chiefly lived upon. “And the river stank”; the blood into which it was turned being corrupted through the heat of the sun, and the dead fishes floating upon it being putrefied.

This was just saying that exactly what God had said would happen, did happen.

Exodus 7:22 "And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, neither did he hearken unto them; as the LORD had said."

“The magicians ... did so with their enchantments”: How ludicrous and revealing that the magicians resorted to copycat methodology instead of reversing the plague. What they did, bringing just more blood, did serve, however, to bolster Pharaoh's stubbornness.

We see here, that the lying, deceit of Satan was even at work here. There was no way these magicians could do what God had already done, because all the water was already blood. The only possibility was that some of the water we read about in verse 24 was turned into something

appearing to be blood. The Pharaoh did not want to believe in the true God so he turned his back on this miracle as well.

Exodus 7:23 "And Pharaoh turned and went into his house, neither did he set his heart to this also."

Turned away from Moses and Aaron, and turned back from the river to which he came, and went to his palace in the city. It being perhaps now about dinner time, when all before related had passed.

"Neither did he set his heart to this also": Had no regard to this miracle of turning the waters into blood, as well as he had no regard to the rod being turned into a serpent, and devouring the rods of the magicians; he neither considered the one nor the other, or seriously and closely thought of this, any more than of the other.

He was as stubborn as a mule and even this water being turned into blood, did not change his heart and mind. He believed this was some kind of trick, and he wouldn't fall for it. A person who had sinned over and over would have a hardened heart, not capable of receiving the things of God. This was the case of Pharaoh, here.

Exodus 7:24 "And all the Egyptians digged round about the river for water to drink; for they could not drink of the water of the river."

"Digged round about the river": The only recourse was to tap into the natural water table, the subterranean water supply. Evidently this was the water which was available to the magicians to use (verse 22).

We see here how they lived. From the look of this Scripture above there was no supply of water for anything except drinking water. They just had to do without water for other uses. We do not see the Hebrews mentioned. It appears; they had clear water to drink.

Exodus 7:25 "And seven days were fulfilled, after that the LORD had smitten the river."

"Seven days": An interval of time occurred before another warning was delivered, indicating that the plagues did not occur rapidly in uninterrupted succession.

We see here "seven" which means spiritually complete. This blood instead of water lasted seven days. Had this lasted longer than seven days, everything and everyone would have died. Notice here also that this curse or plaque or whatever you would care to call it, came from God, Himself.

Exodus Chapter 7 Continued Questions

1. What was spoken of the condition of Pharaoh's heart?

2. Would he let the Hebrews go?
3. The miracle of Moses' serpent swallowing the magicians' serpents showed what?
4. Had it affected Pharaoh's thinking?
5. Where were Moses and Aaron to see Pharaoh?
6. What were Moses and Aaron to take with them?
7. Why was Pharaoh at the water?
8. Who were Moses and Aaron to tell Pharaoh had sent them?
9. What were they to say to Pharaoh?
10. In what shall Pharaoh know that "He is God"?
11. What did God say would happen, when the rod was extended over the river?
12. Who was this battle between?
13. What makes us know this was real blood?
14. What was one of the main foods of Egypt affected by this plague?
15. What would happen to the fish in this water?
16. What would the water be like?
17. What was Moses and Aaron to do to cause this to happen?
18. Where did this rod come from?
19. What were two of the most unusual places the blood would be?
20. What specific place was the rod stretched out?
21. Why did you suppose the Nile was where the first plague was carried out?
22. Who does this blood in the water affect?
23. Who was this miracle plague done in front of?
24. Who did Pharaoh call to do the same miracle?
25. Was Pharaoh impressed by this plague?
26. Where did Pharaoh go?

27. What will repeated sin do to your heart?
28. Where did the Egyptians get water to drink?
29. How many days did the plague last?
30. Who sent the plague?