

Good evening, TAC! Tonight is going to be one for the books. We are going to have a blessed evening as we capitalize on everything that has been taught so far, while sharing some things with you that will bless you for years to come! Tonight is going to be a deep dive study into heavenly powers, the end times, and to say the least... dragons. We have a lot to cover, so we will start by reviewing some concepts with you that we have taught on as they will be pertinent to our text tonight! Tonight, we will only cover 7:1-7:13.

You will remember that we have been teaching you since Genesis that Israel's time in Egypt is a part of the prophetic pattern characterized by the term "The time of Jacob's trouble." You should remember this slide:

(DO NOT READ)



14 Parallel's (Haran and Egypt): In "Captivity"			
Event	Haran	Egypt	
1. Escaping external threat	Gen 27: 43-45	Gen 45: 11	
2. Greatly multiplied	Gen 29: 32	Ex 1:7	
3. Time of favor	Gen 30: 27	Gen 47: 5-6	
4. Change of heart towards Israel	Gen 31: 1-2	Ex 1: 8	
5. Issue with prosperity	Gen 31: 1-2	Ex 1: 9	
6. Mistreated	Gen 31: 7,41	Ex 1: 11	
7. The Lord sees his suffering	Gen 31:12	Ex 3:7	

You should remember that we taught you from the books of Genesis, Hosea, and Jeremiah that Jacob's life forms an anticipatory parallel that the nation of Israel would go through in the story of Exodus.

~

This pattern would be repeated in the time of Hosea and Jeremiah. Jesus also predicted that it would still come in the future.

The repeating cycle that we have seen so far is:

(SLIDE)



- Israel is in relative peace and is prospering.
- Israel experiences the labor pains of gentile captivity and oppression.
- Israel experiences deliverance.
- Israel experiences birth or rebirth, and there is a union between God and his people.

Throughout our studies in Exodus, you have seen that the Israelites' stay in Egypt forms a prophetic pattern that will be repeated in the book of Revelation.

~

So far, we have been able to see that during the time of Jacob's trouble in the book of Exodus, there are major satanic plots that develop against the Israelites to discredit God by oppressing his people.

We have seen Pharaoh emerge as an Anti-Christ figure who oppresses the people of Israel, employs psychological warfare, humbles the Israelites to the point of breathlessness, and has no regard for YHWH.

You should remember that one of the major themes developing in the book is that God will make His name known to Israel, to Pharaoh, and to all the Egyptians.

God said to Moses in advance that He would make Himself known through signs, wonders, and miracles, so that all would see that He is God, and the Book of Revelation is no different!

One of the major features of the Time of Jacob's trouble in the book of Revelation is the occurrence of great signs and miracles on earth. Tonight, we will see the beginnings of these things in Exodus.

We will also see the emergence of another major plot in the time of Jacob's trouble, namely the conflict between God and the other heavenly powers on earth.

~

To start, let's read...

- **Exodus 12:12 (ESV)**

12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on **all the gods of Egypt** I will execute judgments: I am the LORD.

In the book of Exodus so far, we have seen that the people of Israel are oppressed by the Egyptians, but the reason that is happening is because there is a larger, otherworldly conflict occurring and the nations involved are proxies being used by heavenly powers.

In Exodus 12, God states that one of the main reasons He is punishing Egypt in this way is so that the gods of Egypt are judged and rendered powerless before Him.

If this is a new thought to you, then you should consider this next verse.

- **Deuteronomy 32:8–9 (ESV)**

8 When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. 9 But the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.

The bible presents a different worldview than is usually accepted in most Christian circles.

~

Many believers today have the idea that after Noah, families began to group together and eventually formed nations based on their ethnic backgrounds. The Bible makes the claim that it was God who divided mankind and he separated nations according to the number of the "Sons of God".

The term "Sons of God" is used by Moses to describe heavenly angelic beings. For further study on this, go back and listen to our teaching on Genesis 6.

The clear understanding from Deuteronomy 32 is that the nations were divided according to the number of the "sons of God," or, to put it another way, "lesser gods."

This would mean that each lesser god was assigned a nation to steward, and each nation was apportioned to a "patron" god.

This is in contrast to the nation of Israel, which Deuteronomy 32 says YHWH has kept for himself in reserve.

You can understand from this point of view that when a war occurs on the earth, it is a reflection of the war in the heavens.

- **Daniel 10:18–20 (ESV)**

18 Again one having the **appearance of a man** touched me and strengthened me.

19 And he said, “O man greatly loved, fear not, peace be with you; be strong and of good courage.” And as he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, “Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.”

20 Then he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? But now I will return to fight against the **prince of Persia**; and when I go out, behold, the **prince of Greece will come**.

~

In this passage, there is a being that has the appearance of a man, but clearly is not.

This heavenly being is engaged in a conflict with another heavenly being who is in charge of the nation of Persia. He also mentions that the heavenly being in charge of Greece is on its way.

Again, you can see that nations have spiritual powers over them, but the one nation that the Lord presides over is Israel.

- **Psalm 82:1–4 (ESV)**

1 God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the **gods** he holds judgment:

2 “How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked? Selah

3 Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute.

4 Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.”

The notion that Christianity is merely a monotheistic religion with only a singular God, devoid of any other deities, fails to capture the biblical truths about the heavenly realms.

The Bible reveals the existence of numerous lesser gods, or deities with a lowercase “g.”

Adonai, El Shadai, or YHWH stands as the Most High God, deserving worship. In comparison to Him, the other heavenly powers pail in comparison.

~

Furthermore, Psalm 82 portrays God in conflict with the lesser spiritual deities, as they are rebellious to Him.

- **Psalms 89:6-11 (ESV)**

For who in the skies can be compared to the LORD? Who among the heavenly beings is like the LORD, 7 a God greatly to be feared in the council of the holy ones, and awesome above all who are around him? 8 O LORD God of hosts, who is mighty as you are, O LORD, with your faithfulness all around you? 9 You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, you still them. 10 You crushed Rahab like a carcass; you scattered your enemies with your mighty arm. 11 The heavens are yours; the earth also is yours; the world and all that is in it, you have founded them.

God is presented as being superior among the other Gods and he alone is the one who is worthy to be feared and worshipped.

He is the creator and the originator of everything in the universe, and he is exalted above the lesser gods.

(KEEP UP DURING ALL VERSES ON SLIDE)



IMPURITY IN THE HEAVENS

- Job 15:15 - No trust in his holy ones; heavens are not pure
- Job 4:18 - No trust in his servants; charges angels with error
- 2 Peter 2:4 - God did not spare angels when they sinned
- Hebrews 9:23-24 - heavenly things to be purified
- Isaiah 24:21-22 - God punishes hosts of heaven

- **Job 15:15 (ESV)**

15 Behold, God puts no trust in his holy ones, and the **heavens are not pure** in his sight;

~

When you think about the heavens, most of the time we are tempted to believe that it is a pure and spotless place where nothing can go wrong.

Apparently, in the sight of God, the heavens are not pure, which would mean that something had to occur for God to not trust his holy ones.

We are not sure exactly what happened, but it is safe to say that there is a clash presented in the Heavens wherein God, who presides over the council of the lesser gods, is in conflict with lesser powers who are rebellious.

- **Job 4:18 (ESV)**

18 Even in his servants he puts no trust, and his **angels** he charges with error;

Again, something must have occurred for God to not trust his holy ones.

The Bible is silent on what exactly happened, but it is not difficult to find evidence of a pre-existent conflict in the heavens, and its ramifications are having an impact on the earth.

In our studies of the Book of Exodus, we see that God's aim is to judge the gods of Egypt. These gods are the ones presiding over the nation of Egypt, which seeks to display dominance over Adonai's people. This indicates that their gods are trying to mock Adonai and exert dominance over Him, but that is not going to happen!

~

- **2 Peter 2:4 (ESV)**

4 For if God did not spare **angels when they sinned**, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment;

Peter is writing based on his understanding of the rest of the Bible and he mentions heavenly beings or lesser gods that sinned against Adonai and rebelled against him.

The story of the Bible is a narrative that unfolds as a result of a Heavenly defection, and Adonai is correcting the problem at hand by using the nation of Israel as His chosen vessel to judge the heavenly powers that are at odds with Him.

- **Hebrews 9:23–24 (ESV)**

23 Thus it was necessary for the copies of the **heavenly things to be purified** with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

24 For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.

We have already noted that the heavens are not pure due to the result of a heavenly defection and lesser gods that sinned against Adonai. That defection affected the whole earth and mankind entered into rebellion against God as a result.

The Gospel is the solution to mankind's rebellion and the earth's corruption, and it is also the solution to the heavenly rebellion.

~

Jesus Christ came to offer atonement for all humanity, but He also came to provide atonement for the heavens. He is the one who was at the Father's side, came down from heaven, and went back to offer his blood to cleanse the heavens. He is the one who unites heaven and earth through his sacrifice and allows men access to the holy of holies in the heavens!

- **Isaiah 24:21–22 (ESV)**

21 On that day the LORD will punish the host of heaven, in heaven, and the kings of the earth, on the earth.

22 They will be gathered together as prisoners in a pit; they will be shut up in a prison, and after many days they will be punished.

There is a day in store for the final judgement of all who are in rebellion against Adonai. The Lord is going to reign on the earth, and there will be none to confront Him or rebel against His rule.

~

In our text tonight, we are still in the midst of the war between God and the lesser regional deities, and Israel is caught in the middle.

We are going to see that in the Time of Jacob's trouble, Israel is oppressed by foreign nations that are governed by rebellious principalities that are in conflict with God, but God is going to save his people out of their hands while judging their gods with mighty signs and miraculous powers.

Before we begin, let's take one more passage.

- **Ezekiel 36:23-28 (ESV)**

23 And I will vindicate the holiness of my **great name**, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. **And the nations will know that I am the LORD**, declares the Lord GOD, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes. 24 **I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land.** 25 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. 26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. 28 You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.

The aim of Adonai is that all will "yada" or "experience" his name by witnessing him fulfill his promises to Israel. God wants the nations to know His name, and He wants the heavens to know His name.

He will accomplish this by gathering his people from the lands that they have been exiled to and oppressed in, and fulfill his word to Abraham by bringing them into the land of Israel to dwell with him.

~

Israel is his chosen nation to demonstrate his superiority over the other gods and to bless the entire world through them. As we go through our chapter tonight, you will see the opening shots of the larger conflict at play and the prophetic pattern that will continue to emerge, revealing how Adonai will finish this fight.

God is orchestrating a scenario for His maximum glory: Moses was reluctant, Pharaoh doesn't believe, Israel is crushed, Egypt is proud, those who are not yet a nation against the greatest nation on the earth...YHWH will reveal Himself beyond any doubt!

Read the text. 7:1-7:13 & pray

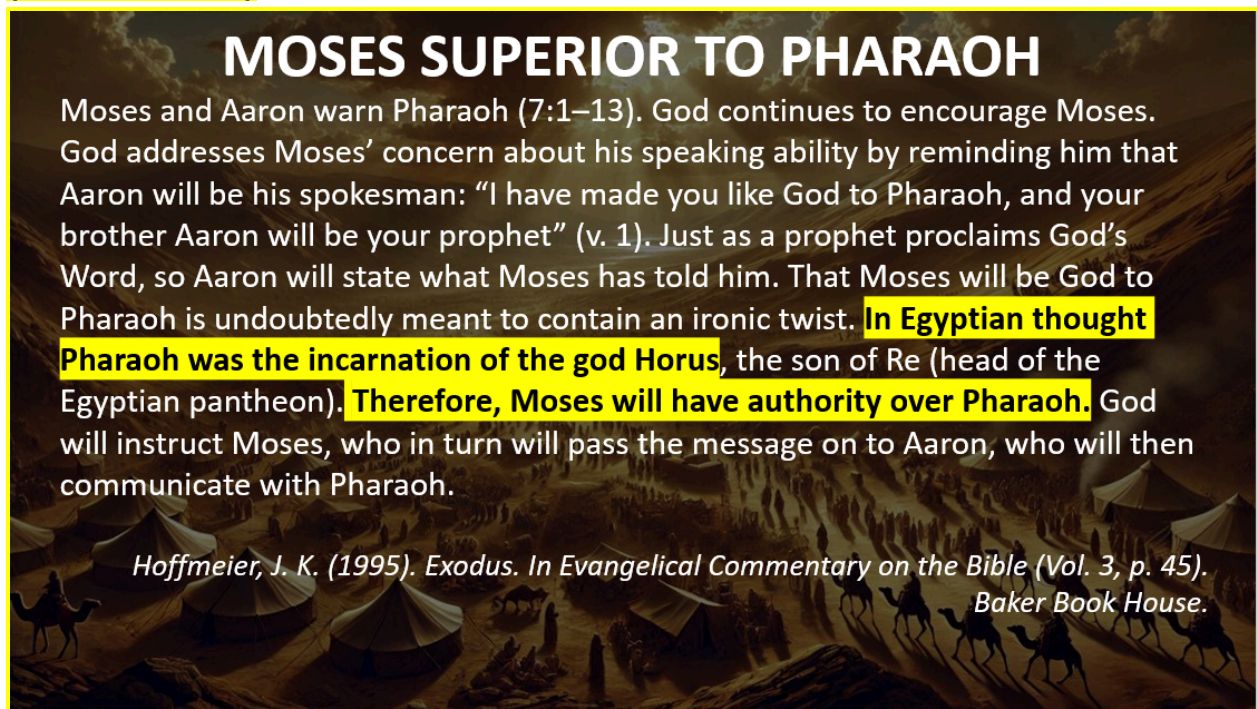
Exodus 7:1–13 (NIVUK84)

1 Then the LORD said to Moses, “See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron will be your prophet.

This statement reflects Exodus 4:16 with the added detail that Aaron would be acting as Moses' prophet to Pharaoh.

To catch what is going on here, take a look at this next slide.

(READ SLIDE)



MOSES SUPERIOR TO PHARAOH

Moses and Aaron warn Pharaoh (7:1–13). God continues to encourage Moses. God addresses Moses' concern about his speaking ability by reminding him that Aaron will be his spokesman: "I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron will be your prophet" (v. 1). Just as a prophet proclaims God's Word, so Aaron will state what Moses has told him. That Moses will be God to Pharaoh is undoubtedly meant to contain an ironic twist. **In Egyptian thought Pharaoh was the incarnation of the god Horus**, the son of Re (head of the Egyptian pantheon). **Therefore, Moses will have authority over Pharaoh.** God will instruct Moses, who in turn will pass the message on to Aaron, who will then communicate with Pharaoh.

Hoffmeier, J. K. (1995). Exodus. In Evangelical Commentary on the Bible (Vol. 3, p. 45). Baker Book House.

~

To put this in simple terms, Adonai is arranging a status structure for Moses that places him in a higher position of authority than Pharaoh. Pharaoh is considered the son of Re, who is the head of the pantheon of Egyptian gods, which would make Pharaoh lower than the highest power in the hierarchy.

Adonai is arranging Moses and Aaron in a way that will cause Aaron to be the one speaking to Pharaoh, which would indicate that they were on equal levels, while Moses would be one position higher than Aaron and Pharaoh.

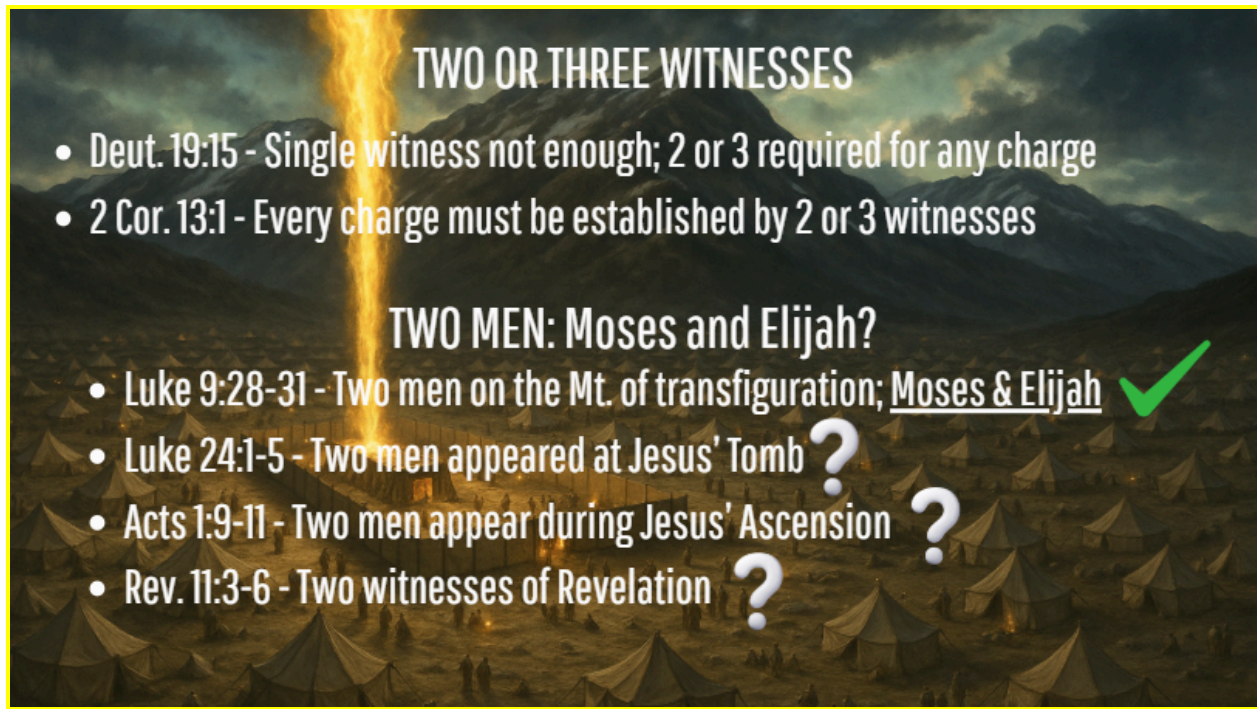


Of course, you know that in terms of fixed value, Moses and Aaron are equal in the sight of God, but God is arranging this structure to indicate that Moses and Moses' God are higher than Pharaoh, who was considered to be a divine being. We could preach all night on the imagery at play here and how Moses is being entrusted with all authority just like Jesus was, but we are not...

We want to make a few comments about the fact that there are two witnesses chosen to represent God and enact His judgments.

~

(DO NOT READ)



- **Deuteronomy 19:15 (ESV)**

15 “A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of **two witnesses or of three witnesses** shall a charge be established.

We could list many more references, but to save some time, understand that God has determined that charges and decisions have to be established by two or more witnesses! A single person model does not exist in the mind of God to represent his will on earth.

- **2 Corinthians 13:1 (ESV)**

13 This is the third time I am coming to you. Every charge must be established by the evidence of **two or three witnesses**.

Paul is commenting on the Torah and saying that every charge must be established in this way. You should be able to see that God is using two witnesses, Moses and Aaron, to bring a charge against Pharaoh and the gods that he serves!

~

This is highly informative about the process required to work in teams and the way a church should function. The importance of this truth should be underscored by the fact that God uses two witnesses from the very first book of the Bible to the last book of the Bible. In fact, Moses, being one of those witnesses, continues all the way to the Book of Revelation.

- **Luke 9:28–31 (ESV)**

28 Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. 29 And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. 30 And behold, **two men** were talking with him, **Moses** and Elijah, 31 who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

Moses was one of the men selected by God to witness Jesus' transfiguration and to speak to Him about His departure, which in Greek is His Exodus.

Moses, who was the author of the Law, and Elijah, who was Israel's greatest prophet, joined Jesus in affirming his mission and his Exodus from the earth.

- **Luke 24:1–5 (ESV)**

24 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. 2 And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, 3 but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 While they were perplexed about this, behold, **two men** stood by them in dazzling apparel. 5 And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead?

~

Notice here that these are not two angels, but they are men. These two men are showing up to bear witness to the resurrection of Jesus right before his departure or Exodus from the earth.

We cannot be 100% certain because the text does not specify, but if we had to place a bet, we would wager that these two men are the same witnesses who met with Jesus and discussed his departure.

- **Acts 1:9–11 (ESV)**

9 And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. 10 And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, **two men** stood by them in white robes, 11 and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

At the actual time of Jesus' departure, two men (not angels) appear to witness the event.

Again, our gut feeling is that these two men are the same men who spoke to Jesus about his departure (Moses and Elijah), and are here now to establish the matter as two witnesses.

- **Revelation 11:3–6 (ESV)**

3 And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth.” 4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. 5 And if anyone would harm them, fire pours from their mouth and consumes their foes. If anyone would harm them, this is how he is doomed to be killed.

6 They have the power to shut the sky, that no rain may fall during the days of their prophesying, and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague, as often as they desire.

~

In the book of Revelation, during the final iteration of the time of Jacob's trouble, there are two witnesses that are establishing God's judgment on the earth, and they are being used to judge the lesser gods that are in opposition to Adonai.

Notice the fact that these two witnesses perform miraculous signs and wonders just like what is happening in the Book of Exodus. If you think about the nature of the miraculous signs that they perform, shutting up the sky so that it doesn't rain, plagues, turning waters into blood, and fire consuming their enemies, it is hard to imagine that these two men would be anyone other than Moses and Elijah.

As we continue, pay attention to what we are going to cover. What we are seeing in the book of Exodus is highly informative of what will happen in the last days!

2 You are to say everything I command you, and your brother Aaron is to tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites go out of his country.

One of the recurring themes that you will see as we continue our studies in the Book of Exodus is the unity and shalom that Moses and Aaron operate in. Moses is being told that he is to say everything that God tells him and at the same time, Aaron is the one who will do the talking.

This is very similar to what we see in the Book of Acts, where Peter and John speak in one accord, and this should be the aim of all ministry teams!

Furthermore, you should notice the complete disregard that God has for Pharaoh. God could have used Moses to speak to him (who would have been royalty in Egypt), but instead, he uses the man who grew up a slave!

~

This should be seen as a slap in the face by God to Pharaoh, which is what God loves to do to his enemies.

- **1 Corinthians 1:27–29 (NIVUK84)**

27 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.
28 He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are,
29 so that no-one may boast before him.

God not only desires to judge the gods of Egypt, but he wants to mock them while he is doing it!

3 But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and though I multiply my miraculous signs and wonders in Egypt,

God knows in advance Pharaoh will not listen, but did you notice that God will be the one who hardens Pharaoh's heart?

While it may seem like Pharaoh does not have a say in this matter, we want to assure you that, although God is going to harden his heart, Pharaoh is very much in control and his own free will is intact throughout this process.

We will get into this at a later time, but for now, we want to comment on how Pharaoh's heart will be hardened.

We are going to see next week that when there is relief from the consequences of the judgment of God, Pharaoh will harden his heart. In our text tonight, you will see that it is after Pharaoh's magicians duplicate a miracle that Pharaoh finds relief in the idea that his own magicians seem to be able to do the same thing.

~

Essentially, this would mean to him that YHWH is not all-powerful if his magicians can perform the same miracles, and this would alleviate him from the possibility that what Moses and Aaron are proclaiming will actually happen. This will only expose Pharaoh to the greater necessity of experiencing God's judgment.

- **Isaiah 26:9-10 (ESV)**

9 My soul yearns for you in the night; my spirit within me earnestly seeks you. For when your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness. 10 If favor is shown to the wicked, he does not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness he deals corruptly and does not see the majesty of the LORD.

You should thank Luke Ledesma because his studies have helped us glean from this passage! If Pharaoh does not receive the full penalty of his actions, then Egypt would not get to experience the righteousness of God, which means that Pharaoh's persistent and increasing levels of refusal of God's Words and denial of His presence make him not just an obstinate fool, but one like Nabal...and Nabal must die!

God is using Pharaoh as the head of the nation to reveal the true nature of his character in terms of his hatred of sin and his love of righteousness. The Egyptians will see the majesty of Adonai and his sovereignty over their gods as a result of their disobedience.

What we see in the Book of Exodus could not be a better description of the sovereign nature of Adonai and His ability to reveal Himself. Pharaoh is the head of the Egyptian nation and he is also being used by the regional gods over the area to defy the LORD. The individual Egyptians are under the rulership of Pharaoh and he is using them to carry out his will against the Israelites.

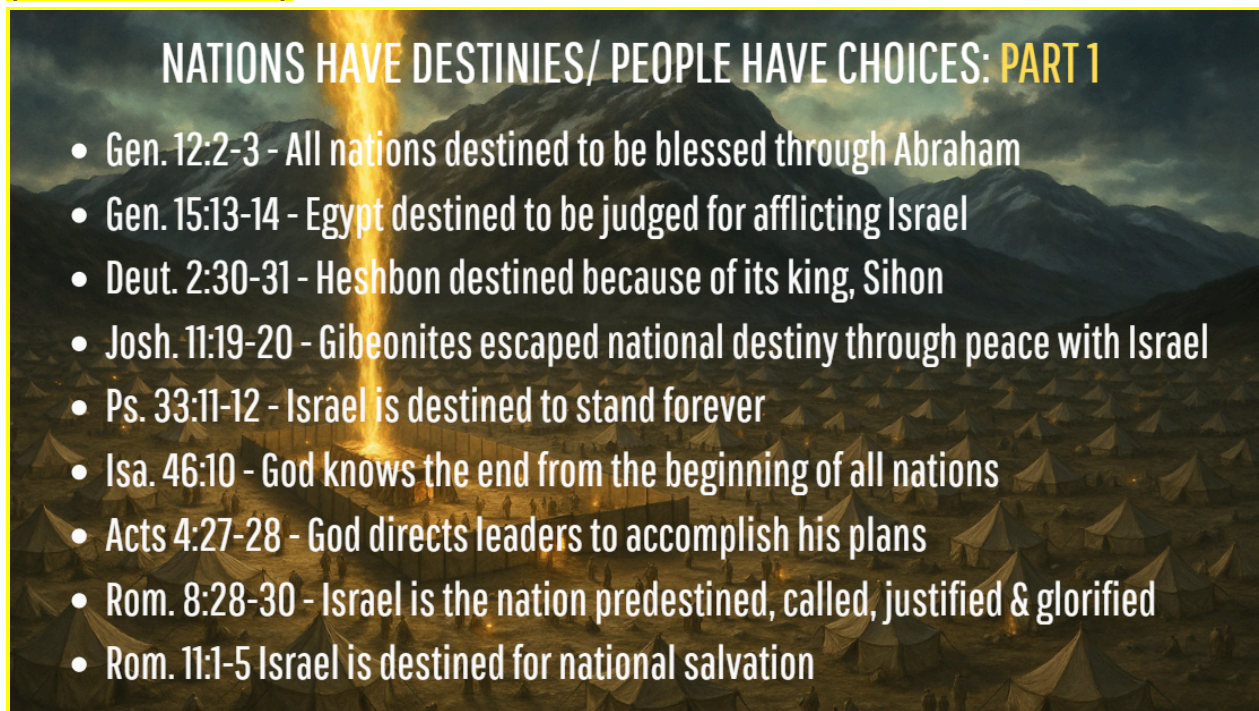
~

As the head of the nation, Pharaoh is going to harden his own heart AND God is hardening his heart to produce an intended effect that will reveal the maximum amount of glory for Adonai as his judgments are enacted.

Through Adonai's miraculous power, He is going to judge the gods, Pharaoh, and Pharaoh's people, and all three will know the righteousness of God. Exodus 9:16 states that this is the reason God raised up Pharaoh, so that his name would be proclaimed throughout the earth.

We are going to see Pharaoh harden his own heart in our text tonight, but before we do that we want you to see that God is using Pharaoh's actions to cause his will to be carried out because biblically speaking, nations and their roles in God's overall plan, are determined by the Lord and as the head of the nation Pharaoh is going to take Egypt in the direction that is pre-ordained by God.

(DO NOT READ)



NATIONS HAVE DESTINIES/ PEOPLE HAVE CHOICES: PART 1

- Gen. 12:2-3 - All nations destined to be blessed through Abraham
- Gen. 15:13-14 - Egypt destined to be judged for afflicting Israel
- Deut. 2:30-31 - Heshbon destined because of its king, Sihon
- Josh. 11:19-20 - Gibeonites escaped national destiny through peace with Israel
- Ps. 33:11-12 - Israel is destined to stand forever
- Isa. 46:10 - God knows the end from the beginning of all nations
- Acts 4:27-28 - God directs leaders to accomplish his plans
- Rom. 8:28-30 - Israel is the nation predestined, called, justified & glorified
- Rom. 11:1-5 Israel is destined for national salvation

- **Genesis 12:2–3 (ESV)**

2 And I will make of you a great **nation**, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Nations have destinies, people have choices. Abraham is the head of the only nation (Israel) that is destined for salvation. People can choose to be a part and join them or choose to dishonor them and be cursed.

~

- **Genesis 15:13–14 (ESV)**

13 Then the LORD said to Abram, “Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. 14 But I will bring judgment on the **nation** that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions.

God predestined that the Nation of Israel would be slaves and that the nation that enslaved them would be judged.

The actions of nations are determined by God and individuals have choices. If an Israelite does not go into Egypt, he is in rebellion. On the other hand, if an Egyptian chooses to bless an Israelite, he could be blessed.

- **Deuteronomy 2:30–31 (ESV)**

30 But Sihon the king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him, for the LORD your God **hardened** his spirit and made his heart obstinate, that he might give him into your hand, as he is this day. 31 And the LORD said to me, ‘Behold, I have begun to give Sihon and his land over to you. Begin to take possession, that you may occupy his land.’

Sihon is the head of a nation, which means that God would steer him in the direction of the national destiny of Heshbon. God hardened his heart to ensure that what the Lord destined for his kingdom would come about.

Individual Heshbonites could have sided with Israel and not joined their national destiny....

~

- **Joshua 11:19–20 (ESV)**

19 There was not a city that made peace with the people of Israel except the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon. They took them all in battle. 20 For it was the LORD’s doing to **harden** their hearts that they should come against Israel in battle, in order that they should

be devoted to destruction and should receive no mercy but be destroyed, just as the LORD commanded Moses.

God hardened their hearts so that his will would be carried out for the nations of Canaan, which were predestined by Adonai.

The Gibeonites were a part of the nations that God destined to be destroyed, but they chose to join Israel and leave their national destiny.

- **Psalm 33:11–12 (ESV)**

The **counsel of the LORD stands forever**, the **plans of his heart** to all generations. 12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!

The plans for nations don't change. People have choices, nations have destinies.

- **Isaiah 46:10 (ESV)**

declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, '**My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.**'

God's purposes for the nations will stand and there is nothing that Pharaoh could do about it. We could ask the question, "What would happen if Pharaoh repented?" but he didn't....

~

God determines the destinies of nations and although individuals in each nation have choices, the nations are going to fulfill God's plan for them, for better or worse....

- **Acts 4:27–28 (ESV)**

27 for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both **Herod** and **Pontius Pilate**, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, 28 to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.

At the time of Jesus' death, Herod and Pontius Pilate were the leaders of the nations, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel.

God used both of these men to fulfill His predestined plan. However, not all Romans or Israelites participated alongside these men; some recognized the righteousness of God through Jesus and chose to join Him.

- **Romans 8:28–30 (ESV)**

28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those whom he **predestined** he also called, and those whom he called he also **justified**, and those whom he justified he also **glorified**.

Israel is predestined to be glorified as a nation. They are the **only nation that has this destiny**.

~

Individual Israelites can choose to rebel and forfeit their participation in their national destiny. Individual Gentiles can choose to obey God and join Israel in their destiny!

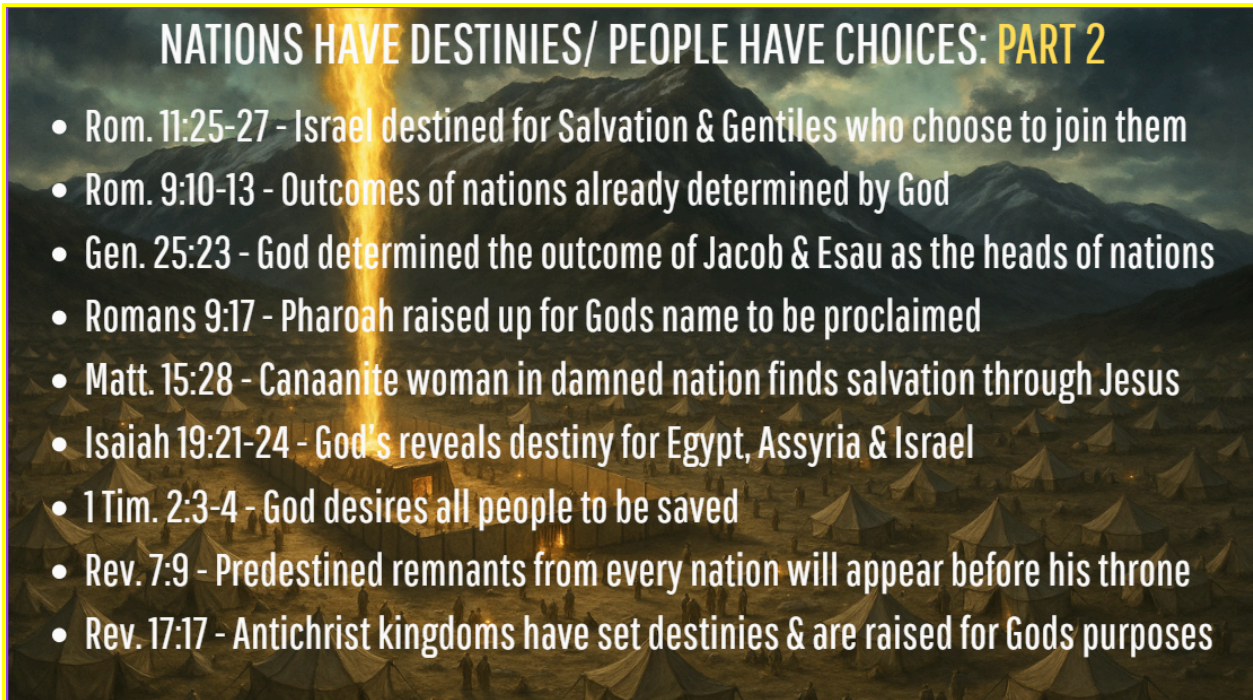
- **Romans 11:1–5 (ESV)**

11 I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel? 3 “Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life.” 4 But what is God’s reply to him? “I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the

knee to Baal.” 5 So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace.

Israel is destined to receive **national salvation**. Although there is a partial hardening, the nation will arrive at the place that God determined for them.

(DO NOT READ)



NATIONS HAVE DESTINIES/ PEOPLE HAVE CHOICES: PART 2

- Rom. 11:25-27 - Israel destined for Salvation & Gentiles who choose to join them
- Rom. 9:10-13 - Outcomes of nations already determined by God
- Gen. 25:23 - God determined the outcome of Jacob & Esau as the heads of nations
- Romans 9:17 - Pharaoh raised up for God's name to be proclaimed
- Matt. 15:28 - Canaanite woman in damned nation finds salvation through Jesus
- Isaiah 19:21-24 - God's reveals destiny for Egypt, Assyria & Israel
- 1 Tim. 2:3-4 - God desires all people to be saved
- Rev. 7:9 - Predestined remnants from every nation will appear before his throne
- Rev. 17:17 - Antichrist kingdoms have set destinies & are raised for God's purposes

- **Romans 11:25–27 (ESV)**

25 Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26 And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob”; 27 “and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins.”

There is a plan in place for both Jews and Gentiles. The Nation of Israel is destined for salvation and Gentiles as a whole are going to join them.

~

Gentile nations are ultimately going to be blessed, but only those individuals who choose to do so.

- **Romans 9:10–13 (ESV)**

10 And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, 11 **though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls—** 12 she was told, “The older will serve the younger.” 13 As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”

Jacob and Esau are both heads of nations and their outcomes were determined for them before they were born because their national destinies were foreknown by God.

- **Genesis 25:23 (ESV)**

23 And the LORD said to her,
“**Two nations are in your womb**, and two peoples from within you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the older shall serve the younger.”

Jacob and Esau were the heads of two nations, and the outcomes of their lives were determined by God.

God knew in advance what their choices would be and used them to carry out his will. Combine your understanding of the Lord "knowing something" with what we have learned about every matter being established by 2 or 3 witnesses. The Lord holds Himself to the same standard. Though He knows the hearts of men, He still reserves judgment until a thing has been proven...even in the heavens.

~

Somebody had to initiate the national role of the Edomites, and Esau proved to be the man who wanted to do it more than anyone else.

Nobody forced him to sell his birthright. Nobody forced him to marry Canaanite women. Nobody forced him to settle in the East. God had a plan

for the nations of Israel and Edom, and Esau's own actions caused him to be used by God to start the process.

- **Romans 9:17 (ESV)**

17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, “For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.”

God raised up Pharaoh to produce His will.

- **Matthew 15:28 (ESV)**

28 Then Jesus answered her, “O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire.” And her daughter was healed instantly.

Individuals in damned nations have choices for salvation. This is a Canaanite woman.

- **Isaiah 19:21–24 (ESV)**

21 And the LORD will make himself known to the Egyptians, and the Egyptians will know the LORD in that day and worship with sacrifice and offering, and they will make vows to the LORD and perform them. 22 And the LORD will strike Egypt, striking and healing, and they will return to the LORD, and he will listen to their pleas for mercy and heal them.

23 In that day there will be a highway from **Egypt** to **Assyria**, and Assyria will come into Egypt, and Egypt into Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians. 24 In that day **Israel** will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth,

God has a plan for these three nations: Egypt, Assyria, and Israel.

The individuals of those nations can play a part if they want...

~

- **1 Timothy 2:3–4 (ESV)**

3 This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

God desires that every individual to be saved, but He steers the nations.

- **Revelation 7:9 (ESV)**

9 After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands,

It is predestined that a remnant of every nation will be assembled before the throne. It is up to those individuals to choose whether or not they make it.

- **Revelation 17:17 (ESV)**

17 for God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by being of one mind and handing over their royal power to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled.

Kingdoms of the antichrist are raised up for God's purposes. The national destinies of those nations are already set and yet individuals within those nations can choose how they participate.

Based on the merit of this passage, it would be safe to assume that most of the individuals within these respective nations will join their national destinies in submitting to the beast, but there will always be a remnant of righteous individuals that will refuse and side with the LORD.

~

In our chapter tonight, Pharaoh is being used by God to bring about the national destiny of Egypt. As the head of the nation, God is going to harden Pharaoh's heart to ensure that what the LORD said will come about.

Pharaoh will harden his own heart in this process, which is what God foresaw and will end up fulfilling the role that God destined for his nation.

4 he will not listen to you. Then I will lay my hand on Egypt and with mighty acts of judgment I will bring out my divisions, my people the Israelites.

5 And the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring the Israelites out of it.”

By this point, we trust that the phrase "stretch out" or "send out" is something you are already familiar with from our previous teachings and sermons. One aspect of this phrase is worth highlighting in more detail. The first time this term is used is in Exodus 3:20, where it is mentioned in conjunction with the fact that the Israelites would not only leave Egypt but also plunder it on the way out! Let's read that passage.

- **Exodus 3:19-22 (ESV)**

19 But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by a mighty hand. 20 So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all the wonders that I will do in it; after that he will let you go. 21 And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and when you go, you shall not go empty, 22 but each woman shall ask of her neighbor, and any woman who lives in her house, for silver and gold jewelry, and for clothing. You shall put them on your sons and on your daughters. So you shall plunder the Egyptians."

~

In this passage, the Lord establishes that Pharaoh will not let the Israelites go based on words alone. In fact, Adonai states that he will compel Pharaoh to obey with the phrase "I will stretch out my hand" Then continues to command the Israelites what they should do after the Lord has finished stretching out his hand, that is, the Israelites are to plunder the Egyptians on their way out of the land by asking for gold, silver, jewelry, and clothing. So this phrase "I will stretch out my hand" Should be connected in the mind of Moses to the ultimate fact that God will finish this fight by

bringing Israel out of Egypt laden with treasure. God's use of this phrase here, right before the beginning of the major battle with Pharaoh and the gods of Egypt, is meant to encourage Moses that the outcome of this war is already decided.

Another thing we can glean from this passage, as well as many others, is that Moses' speaking ability is of zero consequence in this story; he is not speaking to Pharaoh; Aaron is. God said in advance that Pharaoh would NOT listen and it would take an outstretched and mighty hand, as well as "wonders" to compel Pharaoh. Words alone were never going to work! Before we move on in our text, consider 1 Cor 4:19-20

- **1 Corinthians 4:19-20 (NIV)**

19 But I will come to you very soon, if the Lord is willing, and then I will find out not only how these arrogant people are talking, but what power they have. 20 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.

Talk without power is of no value. The full message, combined with supernatural power, can judge nations. It is worth considering how much of the power that is a defining characteristic of the Kingdom of God is on display in our lives.

~

6 Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD commanded them.

7 Moses was eighty years old and Aaron eighty-three when they spoke to Pharaoh.

8 The LORD said to Moses and Aaron,

9 “When Pharaoh says to you, ‘Perform a miracle,’ then say to Aaron, ‘Take your staff and throw it down before Pharaoh,’ and it will become a snake.”

10 So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as the LORD commanded. Aaron threw his staff down in front of Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a snake.

11 Pharaoh then summoned the wise men and sorcerers, and the Egyptian magicians also did the same things by their secret arts:

12 Each one threw down his staff and it became a snake. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs.

Saints, Adonai has been gracious to us in our studies, and He has given us insights into this passage that we have never seen before.

We are going to devote almost the remainder of our evening together to uncovering and sharing our findings, which we are sure will provide you and future generations with a great foundation to stand on and build upon.

You will recall that back in Chapter 4, while Moses was still in Midian and encountering Adonai at the burning bush, he was concerned that the people of Israel would not believe he had met with YHWH and that the message of deliverance he brought had come from Adonai. Therefore, Adonai went on to give Moses three different signs intended to validate his authenticity as a spokesman for YHWH. These signs were:

- His staff being turned into a serpent and then back into a staff
- Leprosy appearing in his hand and then being healed
- Water from the Nile turning into blood after being poured on the ground

~

Each of these signs was to be performed only if the previous sign did not produce the intended belief in the Israelites.

When we covered Exodus 4, we examined the signs in great detail, interpreting them through the lens of PaRDeS to understand their significance. One aspect to remember is that in helping Israel overcome their unbelief, Adonai chose to give Israel three signs that were informative to them. On a Remez level, the first two (2) signs would have given them hope of restoration.

With the staff, they probably saw themselves as being cast down to the ground in slavery, feeling like the lowliest people on earth, but the sign gave them hope of ultimately being picked up by God's hand and transformed into the identity, reputation, and character of Adonai's chosen nation.

With the hand healed of leprosy, they probably saw themselves as being stricken and in bondage to the will of Pharaoh. However, the sign would have given them hope that they would ultimately be placed back in the "cloak" or near to the "side" of Adonai, and their works would be restored.

In contrast with the first two (2) signs, there was no restoration in view with the third sign. The Israelites would have understood that Adonai was not blind to the bloodshed that the Nile had been used for, and would have seen the promise that the blood was crying out to God, which would mean that God would answer with judgment. The prophetic nature of this sign of judgement will be marked by the first plague that Adonai unleashes upon Egypt in which the waters of the Nile are turned into blood.

~

As we just read – Pharaoh asked for a sign. Adonai anticipated this would happen and has already equipped Moses and Aaron with the staff of God. What Moses and Aaron bring into the courts of Pharaoh is more powerful than Pharaoh could have ever imagined.

Moses and Aaron will cast down the staff and God and it will turn in a snake. This is much like the sign God shows Moses at the burning bush that he did for the people of Israel. When this is done in the courts of Pharaoh, it serves as a “warning shot” of sorts. Adonai is not yet unleashing His judgments on Egypt, He is instead manifesting a sign that would be of great significance to Pharaoh.

Pharaoh's intentions are clearly revealed in his response to the miracle. Rather than desiring a miracle so that he might believe and yield to the will of Adonai, it is clear that Pharaoh sees this event as an opportunity to challenge and enters into a duel in an attempt to show dominance over Aaron, Moses, and YHWH himself!


Pharaoh will soon and sorely regret this decision of challenging rather than heeding the voice of this sign.

In our session in Exodus 4, we saw that a staff was a very useful tool in the ancient world but it was also a very personal item that would have represented the authority, function, character, commission, judgments and right to rule of the man who wielded it.

~

In addition, a staff also had significant cultic, royal, and religious overtones in Egyptian culture.

(READ SLIDE)



AN EGYPTIAN STAFF

The idea of a “holy staff”, a staff held by priests to represent the deities, and the “rod of God”, **a staff held by the Pharaoh to represent his divine authority and power**, was popular from 1550-1070 BC. Sarcophagi, hieroglyphics, and statues featuring Pharaohs and priests wielding rods/staffs abound. Magicians in Egypt likewise carried **staffs, believed to be endowed with magical powers from the gods.** Archaeology has even uncovered documentation of, **“scenes of magicians holding rods in their hands that could instantly be turned into snakes.”**

John D. Currid, Against the Gods: The Polemical Theology of the Old Testament (Wheaton: Crossway, 2013), 113-15, 115-16

Let's take another slide and then comment on their combined significance:

(READ SLIDE)

EGYPT AND SNAKES

Pharaoh's very crown, similarly, believed to possess and represent the power of the gods, was a dilated hood (meant to represent a cobra) with twin snakes wrapped around, facing forward. **The serpent goddess, Wadjet, and the vulture-goddess, Nekhbet, manifested their power and sovereignty in the front of the king's crown where a figure of an enraged cobra sat.**

John D. Currid and Kenneth Kitchen, Ancient Egypt and the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Academic, 1997), 87-92.

Sometimes, Pharaoh's staff itself took a serpentine form.

Karen Randolph Joines, Serpent Symbolism in the Old Testament: A Linguistic, Archaeological, and Literary Study (Haddonfield, N.J: Haddonfield House, 1974), 85

~

As you may already be able to tell, the miracle being performed before Pharaoh would have had a profound and disturbing meaning to him personally! This is particularly significant, considering that when Moses was sent from the burning bush on the mission to confront Pharaoh and free the Israelites, his staff received the new and divine designation: "the staff of God"!

It appears to us that Adonai is employing a great deal of mockery in his confrontation with the deities of Egypt, represented by Pharaoh and his magicians. He takes Egypt's own symbol of authority, power, and divinity (the staff and the serpent), and uses it against them. This would have been a severe blow to Pharaoh's pride and apparent divine rule.

In an amazing display of divine mockery, Adonai outdoes the gods of Pharaoh, beating them at their own game. Moreover, in this confrontation, rather than saying that Aaron's snakes swallowed the magician's snakes, Moses, states that Aaron's staff swallowed the magicians' staffs.

This conveys that the God of Moses and Aaron is completely superior to the gods of Pharaoh and his magicians!

~

In addition, the word "swallow" only appears one other time in the book of Exodus, and that is in Chapter 15, after Adonai destroys the Egyptians through the Red Sea. Moses and the Israelites sing about how YHWH stretched out His hand and the earth "swallowed" them up! Further in the Biblical narrative, the word is used when the earth opens up and swallows Korah and his household!

The idea that the staff of God, swallows the staffs used by Pharaoh's magicians is an unmistakable prophetic picture of the judgment of the gods of Egypt and those subservient to them! Clearly, the importance of the duel of staffs occurring in this chapter cannot be overstated. This duel provides a paradigm by which we are to interpret and understand the rest of the Exodus account.

Both through the staff confrontation and the 10 plagues, YHWH is directly challenging the Egyptian deities' claim to sovereignty.

In a sense, the duel of staffs in our chapter tonight could be likened to a "pre-boxing match face off", where YHWH has clearly demonstrated Himself as superior and totally dominant over His **lesser-god** opponent that He will then go ahead and absolutely destroy in the coming 10-round match-up!

At this point, you may be led to believe that we have exhausted all possible depth and meaning that could be contained in this "pre-boxing match face off"... if that's the case, you would be greatly but joyfully mistaken.

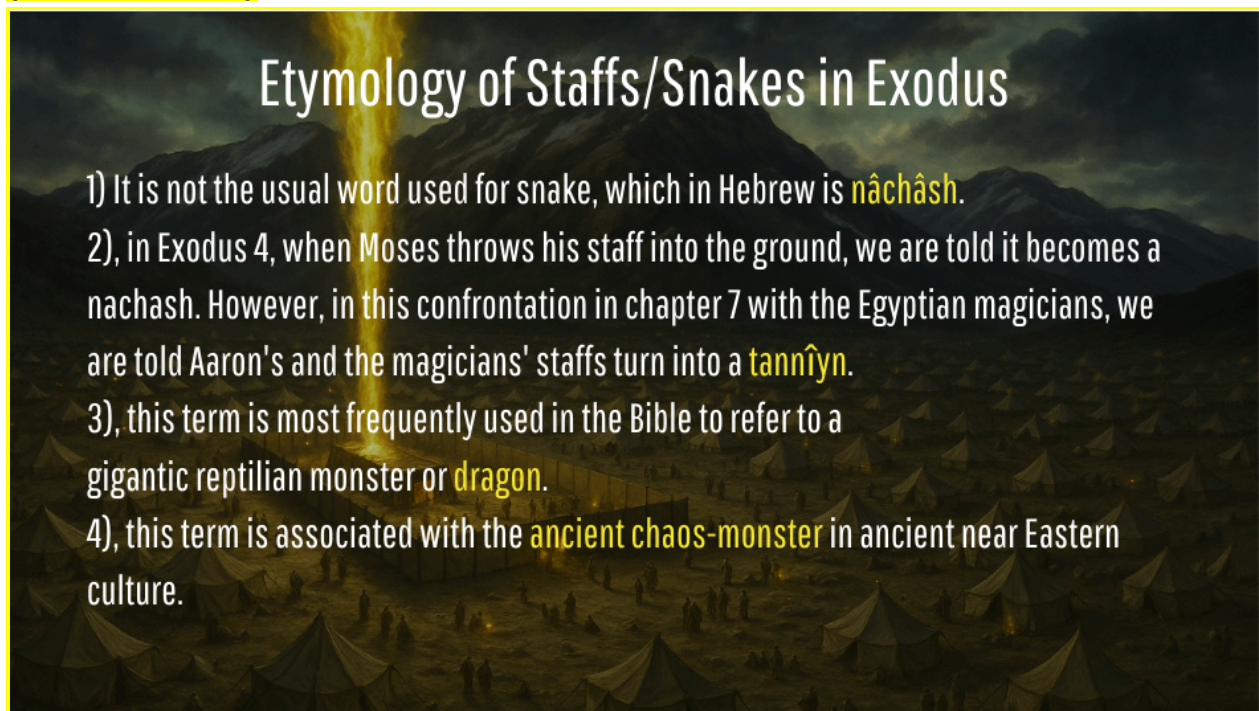
It would be safe to assume that we have only gone ankle-deep into the waters; however, our intention tonight is to take you deep into the primordial and chaotic waters so that we can bring about order, understanding, and revelation!

~

Having established the foundation of significance and divine mockery that Adonai is demonstrating in this event, we are now going to examine more closely the specific word that is used to describe what Aaron's and the magicians' staffs turn into.

The term used in this account is noteworthy for a few reasons:

(READ SLIDE)



Etymology of Staffs/Snakes in Exodus

- 1) It is not the usual word used for snake, which in Hebrew is **nâchâsh**.
- 2), in Exodus 4, when Moses throws his staff into the ground, we are told it becomes a nachash. However, in this confrontation in chapter 7 with the Egyptian magicians, we are told Aaron's and the magicians' staffs turn into a **tannîyn**.
- 3), this term is most frequently used in the Bible to refer to a gigantic reptilian monster or **dragon**.
- 4), this term is associated with the **ancient chaos-monster** in ancient near Eastern culture.

However, rather than simply telling you what we think, we will walk you through the Scriptures, as well as some extra-Biblical resources, to arrive at some monumental conclusions.

~

First, we would like to point out that the term tannîyn is most commonly associated with a creature from the sea. The following are some examples:

(READ SLIDE)

ASSOCIATION BETWEEN WATER AND TANNIYN

Genesis 1:21 (ESV)

21 So God created the **great sea creatures** (gadol tannîyn) and every living creature that moves, with which the **waters** swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

Job 7:12 (ESV)

12 Am I the **sea**, or **a sea monster** (tannîyn), that you set a guard over me?

Psalms 74:13 (ESV)

13 You divided the **sea** by your might; you broke the heads of the **sea monsters** (tannîyn) on the waters.

Isaiah 27:1 (ESV)

27 In that day the LORD with his hard and great and strong sword will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan the twisting serpent, and he will slay the **dragon** (tannîyn) that is in the **sea**.

This slide, by itself, lets us know that there is a good reason not to simply assume that Aaron's and the magician's staffs turned into a simple serpent, but it also establishes that we are most probably referring to some sort of sea creature.

It's important to note that most English translations render the term as 'serpent' or 'snake'. Let's look at some reasons why they translated it as "snake".

~

There are two (and only two) instances in which the word tannîyn is used that could reasonably be translated as serpent:

(READ SLIDE)

TANNIYN AS A SERPENT?

Deuteronomy 32:32–33 (ESV)

32For their vine comes from the vine of Sodom and from the fields of Gomorrah; their grapes are grapes of poison; their clusters are bitter; 33their wine is the poison of serpents (tannîyn) and the cruel venom of asps.

Psalms 91:13 (ESV)

13You will tread on the lion and the adder; the young lion and the serpent (tannîyn) you will trample underfoot.

The association with asps in Deuteronomy 32 seems to indicate that this is a serpent.

Similarly, in Psalm 91, treading underfoot the lion and the adder (which is the same Hebrew word for asp), or the young lion and the serpent, seems to associate asps with tannîyn, hence "serpent" being a sensible translation.

With that being said, there are still very good reasons why the term tannîyn could be translated as something much more than a serpent, if not an actual dragon or sea-monster.

~

First, the word tannîyn appears 23 times in the Older Testament, three (3) of them in our chapter tonight, two (2) credibly relating to common serpents, and at least fifteen (15) times clearly relating to something much more than a simple serpent.

One strong argument for the possibility that it could be a dragon or sea-monster is that the Greek Septuagint of the Bible chooses to translate

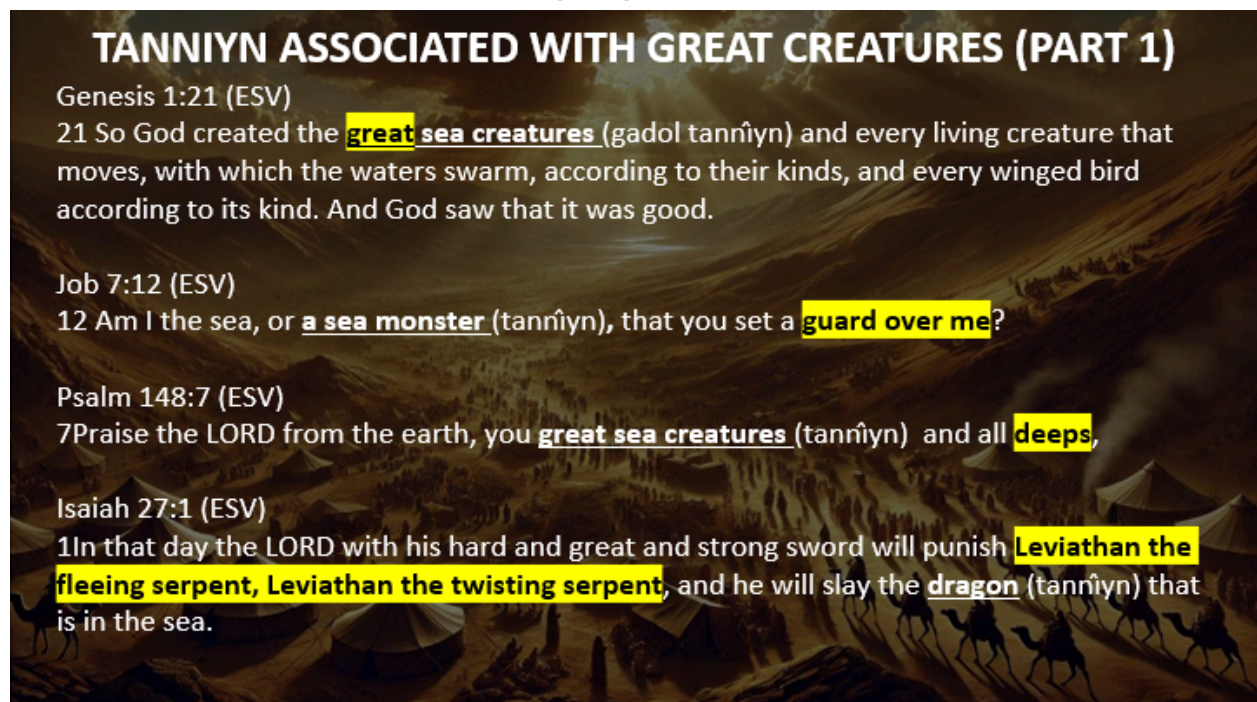
the word tannîyn in Exodus 7 as the word "drakon", also used in Rev 12:3 to represent a fearsome and horrifying dragon:

- **Revelation 12:2–3 (ESV)**

2 She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth. 3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon ("drakon"), with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems.

This does not sound like a regular serpent. In addition, when examining the creatures that the word tannîyn is associated with, it is clear that this is not a simple serpent, but rather a gigantic sea creature.

(READ SLIDE - emphasis on highlighted words)



TANNIYN ASSOCIATED WITH GREAT CREATURES (PART 1)

Genesis 1:21 (ESV)
21 So God created the **great sea creatures** (gadol tannîyn) and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

Job 7:12 (ESV)
12 Am I the sea, or **a sea monster** (tannîyn), that you set a **guard over me?**

Psalms 148:7 (ESV)
7 Praise the LORD from the earth, you **great sea creatures** (tannîyn) and all **deeps**,

Isaiah 27:1 (ESV)
1 In that day the LORD with his hard and great and strong sword will punish **Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan the twisting serpent**, and he will slay the **dragon** (tannîyn) that is in the sea.

~

(READ SLIDE)

TANNIYN ASSOCIATED WITH GREAT CREATURES (PART 2)

Psalms 74:13–14 (ESV)

13You divided the sea by your might; you broke the heads of the sea monsters (tannîyn) on the waters. 14You crushed the heads of Leviathan; you gave him as food for the creatures of the wilderness.

Isaiah 51:9 (ESV)

9Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD; awake, as in days of old, the generations of long ago. Was it not you who cut Rahab in pieces, who pierced the dragon (tannîyn)?

Jeremiah 51:34 (ESV)

34“Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon has devoured me; he has crushed me; he has made me an empty vessel; he has swallowed me like a monster (tannîyn); he has filled his stomach with my delicacies; he has rinsed me out.

With the above verses, we think it is quite safe to say that the tannîyn is most probably a great and strong ancient sea creature, associated with Leviathan and Rahab.

When we read about Rahab in Isaiah 51:9, it is not the Rahab of Jericho. Instead, it is a poetic name for Egypt that Isaiah is connecting to a mythical sea monster and is symbolically representing chaos.

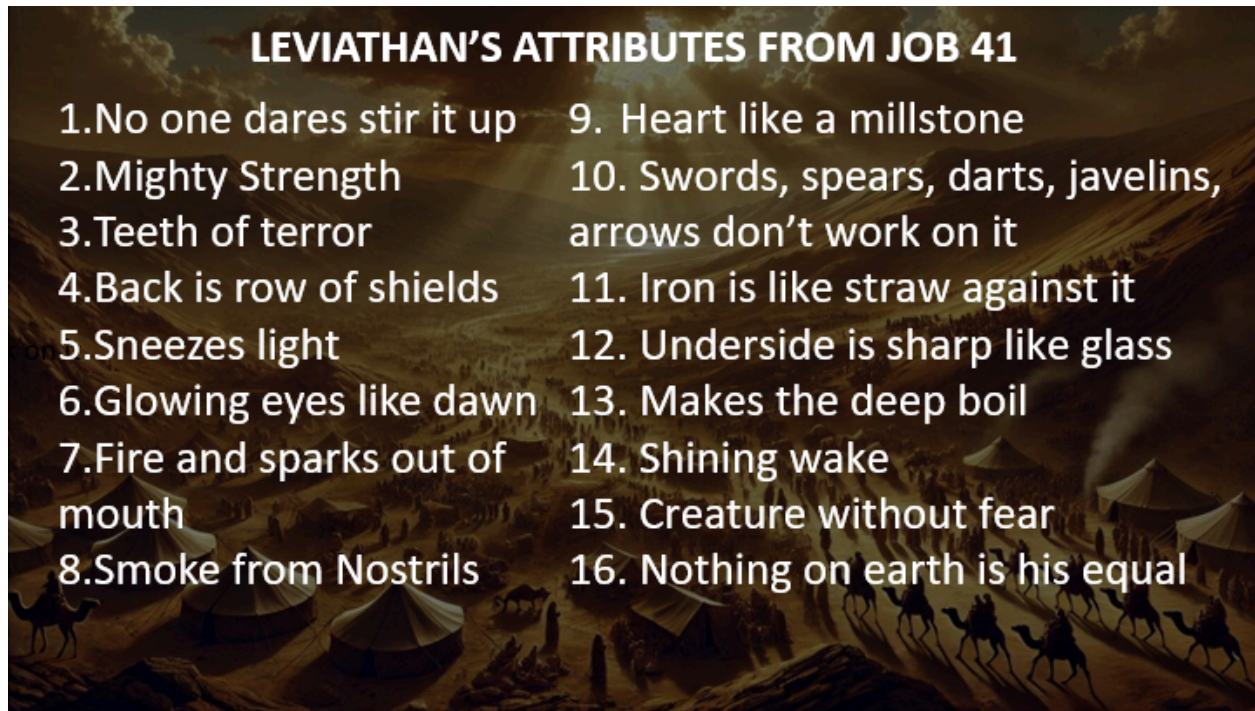
This reference to sea monsters are known to be able to devour, swallow, and crush with great might!... Therefore, there is a great, great probability that it isn't just a simple serpent in our text tonight!

We realize that some of you may not be very familiar with the meanings and details surrounding the Leviathan. If that's the case, we would refer you to Job chapter 41, where Adonai gives us very descriptive information about this creature, while also silencing Job quite dramatically.

Moreover, for the purposes of our study tonight, we'll go ahead and show you some of those descriptors of Leviathan from Job 41.

~

(READ SLIDE)



In addition to all this, not only is the tannîyn associated with a great sea monster, but it is also associated with Egypt and, more specifically, Pharaoh!

(READ SLIDE)

PHARAOH, THE GREAT TANNIYN

Ezekiel 29:1–3 (ESV)

1In the tenth year, in the tenth month, on the twelfth day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me: 2“Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him and against all Egypt; 3speak, and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: “Behold, I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon (tanniyn) that lies in the midst of his streams, that says, My Nile is my own; I made it for myself.

Ezekiel 32:1–2 (ESV)

1In the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me: 2“Son of man, raise a lamentation over Pharaoh king of Egypt and say to him: “You consider yourself a lion of the nations, but you are like a dragon (tanniyn) in the seas; you burst forth in your rivers, trouble the waters with your feet, and foul their rivers.

The relevance of these verses for the interpretation of our chapter tonight are incredible. Approximately 1,000 years after the Exodus story, Adonai prophesies the judgement of Egypt, all while clearly identifying Pharaoh as a great tanniyn.

~

Pharaoh the great sea monster that is the head of the kingdom of Egypt not only is unambiguously identified here, but his association with water is also clearly made.

The poetic and allegorical language of the great sea monster represents Pharaoh as a great tanniyn that has made the river Nile his home, who lies in its streams, and who proudly boasts as if he had made it himself. But wait... there is more, even the prophet Isaiah joins Ezekiel in his description of Pharaoh and Egypt.

(READ SLIDE)

EGYPT/PHARAOH AS RAHAB

Isaiah 30:7 (ESV)

7Egypt's help is worthless and empty; therefore I have called her "Rahab who sits still."

Isaiah 51:9–10 (ESV)

9Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD; awake, as in days of old, the generations of long ago. Was it not you who cut Rahab in pieces, who pierced the dragon (tannîyn) ?

10Was it not you who dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep, who made the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to pass over?

In Isaiah 30, Adonai unambiguously calls Egypt the giant sea creature or tannîyn, identified by the proper name, Rahab.

In Isaiah 51, Rahab, who was identified poetically as Egypt in Isaiah 30, is said to have been cut into pieces when Adonai dried up the sea, and made a way through the depths of the sea for the redeemed to pass over!

~

The identification of Pharaoh and Egypt as the great tannîyn that has made the Nile his home is remarkable! If Pharaoh was proud of allegedly having dominion over the waters, Adonai will overwhelmingly show him that it is YHWH who actually has dominion over all the waters.

In fact, when Pharaoh seeks to destroy the Israelite babies in the Nile, Adonai preserves His savior through the waters of the Nile. Since Pharaoh relies on the waters of the Nile for commerce, transportation, drinking, and almost every major part of life, Adonai is going to turn the waters of the Nile into the blood of the innocent lives that cry out for judgement!

And last but not least, identifying Pharaoh as the tannîyn that is swallowed by Aaron's staff in our chapter tonight, prophetically points to Chapter 15 where it is said to be actually swallowed by the Red Sea!

In light of all that information, we want to give you our personal interpretation and conclusions on these verses.

We imagine you all were asking this question in your minds during this exposition: Do they actually believe that some sort of sea monster or dragon-like creature appeared out of Aaron's and the magician's staffs?

~

Our answer: yes.

One could possibly say: *Perhaps Moses merely used the word tannin to convey the broader theological point that YHWH was the God above all gods and had dominance over Pharaoh.*

That is certainly the theological implication, but we are going to walk you through why we believe that is not all that is happening.

First and foremost, let's discuss why this is not merely a theological insertion of the word *tanniyn* to convey a deeper meaning. This is because God himself is the one who says the staff would become a tannin. Thus, if it were merely theological, that would mean Moses is changing what God said to him.

Last week we discussed at length why that was also not the case with the divine name.

Moreover, let's consider the broader pattern the next few chapters are going to reveal concerning the wonders performed in Egypt. Let's reread verse 3-4 from our chapter tonight:

(READ SLIDE)

Wonders Multiplied

Exodus 7:3-4 (NIV)

³ But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and though I multiply my signs and wonders in Egypt, ⁴ he will not listen to you. Then I will lay my hand on Egypt and with mighty acts of judgment I will bring out my divisions, my people the Israelites.

God had already instructed Moses to perform wonders in front of the Israelites, and he had performed them in front of Moses at the burning bush before that! Meaning, at least two times already, Moses has seen his staff turn into a snake (the Hebrew says *nachash*).

~

Notice the language from this verse, God says "though I MULTIPLY my signs and wonders in Egypt."

Before the confrontation with Pharaoh this chapter, God told Moses that the wonders he has already done - he will MULTIPLY, or *increase*, or *grow*. Before considering the tannin, let's look at the others signs he initially showed Moses.

(DO NOT READ)

Wonders Multiplied: Skin Ailments

Exodus 4:6 (NIV)

⁶Then the Lord said, "Put your hand inside your cloak." So Moses put his hand into his cloak, and when he took it out, **the skin was leprous**—it had become as white as snow. e replied.

Exodus 9:8–9 (NIV)

The Plague of Boils

⁸Then the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "Take handfuls of soot from a furnace and have Moses toss it into the air in the presence of Pharaoh. ⁹It will become fine dust over the whole land of Egypt, and **festering boils will break out on people and animals throughout the land.**"

In Exodus 4, God tells Moses to put his hand in his cloak, it then becomes leprous. In Chapter 9, we are going to see not just a hand leprous, but the entire nation, people and livestock covered completely in festering boils. This is certainly a multiplication or increase of God's wonders. Let's look at the next one:

(DO NOT READ)

Wonders Multiplied: Water & Blood

Exodus 4:9 (NIV)

⁹But if they do not believe these two signs or listen to you, **take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground.** The water you take from the river will become blood on the ground.”

Exodus 7:19 (NIV)

¹⁹The Lord said to Moses, “Tell Aaron, ‘Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt—over the streams and canals, over the ponds and all the reservoirs—and **they will turn to blood.**’ **Blood will be everywhere in Egypt, even in vessels of wood and stone.**”

In Exodus 4, Moses pours some water on the ground and it turns to blood. But, as we will read next week - in Exodus 7 it is not just a little water poured out, but it is the entire Nile and even the water in vessels across Egypt is turned from water to blood. This is certainly a multiplication or increase of God's wonders. This brings us to tonight:

~

(DO NOT READ)

Wonders Multiplied: Snake

Exodus 4:2-3 (NIV)

²Then the Lord said to him, "What is that in your hand?" "A staff," he replied. ³The Lord said, "Throw it on the ground." Moses threw it on the ground and it became a **snake**, and **(nahash)** he ran from it.

Exodus 7:8-9 (NIV)

Aaron's Staff Becomes a Snake

⁸The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, ⁹"When Pharaoh says to you, 'Perform a miracle,' then say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and throw it down before Pharaoh,' and it will become a **snake.**" **(tanniyn)**

In Exodus 4, God tells Moses to throw down his staff, it then turns into a *NACHASH*, or snake, as Moses writes. He repeats this sign in front of the Israelites.

Then, in chapter 7 God himself instructs Moses and Aaron to throw down the staff of God, and he specifically says it will become a *TANNIYN*.

If this is just another snake, it would not be a multiplication of God's wonders like he promised he would do at the beginning of the chapter. But, when you consider that the other two wonders are indeed multiplied, and the Lord even uses a different term, one that predominately describes a beast that is larger, more vicious and powerful than a snake - then the most likely outcome would be that when they threw the staff down, it literally turned into some sort of dragon or sea-monster as God himself said it would, because the sign is being multiplied.

Let's go back to some of the scriptures we mentioned earlier.

(DO NOT READ)

Wonders Multiplied: Snake (LXX)

Exodus 4:2-3 (LES2)

²The Lord said to him, "What is this that is in your hand?" And he said, "A staff." ³And he said, "Hurl it upon the earth!" And he hurled it upon the earth, and it became a **serpent** and Moses fled from it. (ὄφις)

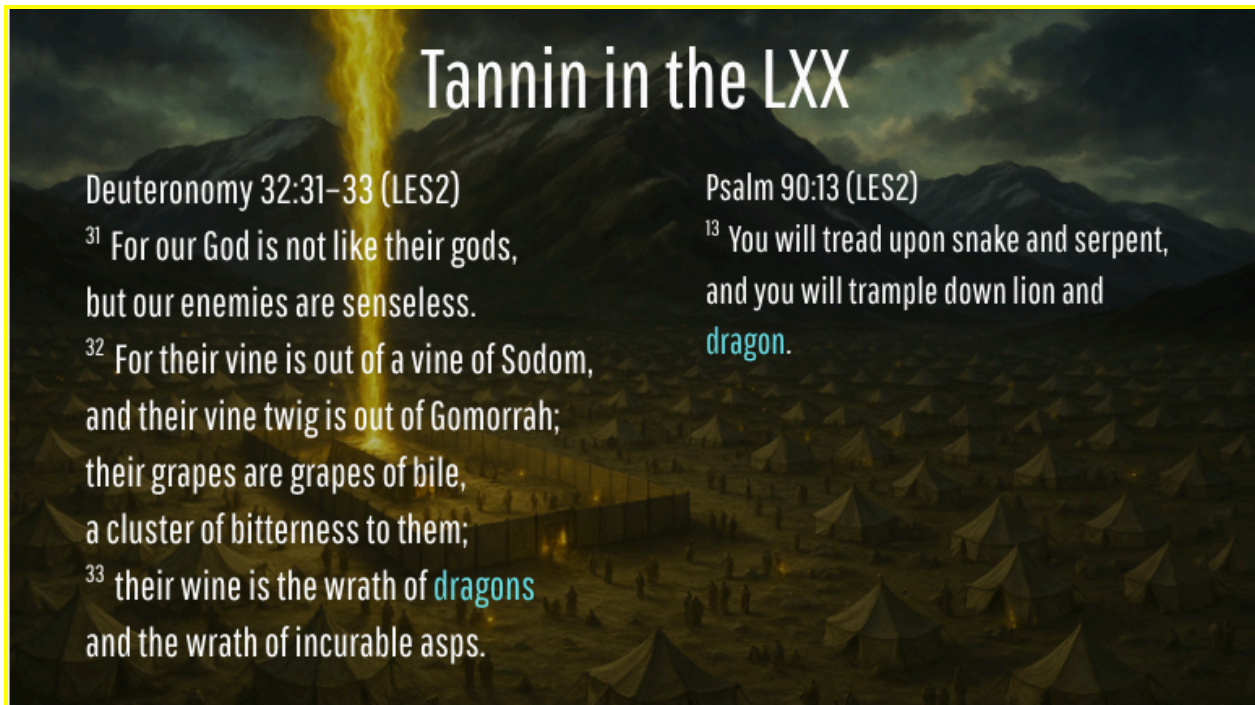
Exodus 7:9 (LES2)

⁹"Now when Pharaoh speaks to you, saying, 'Give to us a sign or wonder,' you will say to Aaron, your brother, 'Take the staff and hurl it upon the earth in front of Pharaoh and in front of his attendants,' and it will become a **dragon** (δράκων).

As we mentioned earlier - You can see on this slide that the writers of the LXX specifically say *dragon* in this instance. Let's look also at the two instances we showed you earlier of *tanniyn* later in the Tanakh where your Bible translates it - snake, and see what the LXX says.

~

(READ SLIDE)



As you can see, both times it is written - dragon, in both Deuteronomy 32 and Psalm 90 (91 in our bibles).

You may be thinking - that seems odd contextually: but in reality it fits our pattern perfectly.

In Deuteronomy 32 Moses is comparing the God of Israel to the gods of their enemies (just like the confrontation in Egypt) and the word *dragon* is used, and in Psalm 90, if you do not use the word tanniyn the verse actually does not make much sense.

In the Psalm, the threat the Psalmist is writing about clearly escalates, not only will the righteous tread on snake and serpent, but also on two greater threats; a lion and a DRAGON (tanniyn).

This leaves a fascinating thought - was it actually a supernatural dragon beast standing in the courts of Pharoah? Most likely - yes.

Another thought for fun - is there anything that we know of in the animal kingdom this could actually be? - we're glad you asked.

~

This is of course, merely our own speculation - but if you consider that the dragon-like monster is something that is reptilian in nature, has made the Nile his home, and devours its own kind. Its hard not to imagine the apex predator of the Nile Basin even today - the Nile Crocodile.

(SLIDE)



Again, this is our personal speculation. There are certain flaws in this thought, but also, we did find scholarly sources that agree with us. Feel free to come ask us about them.

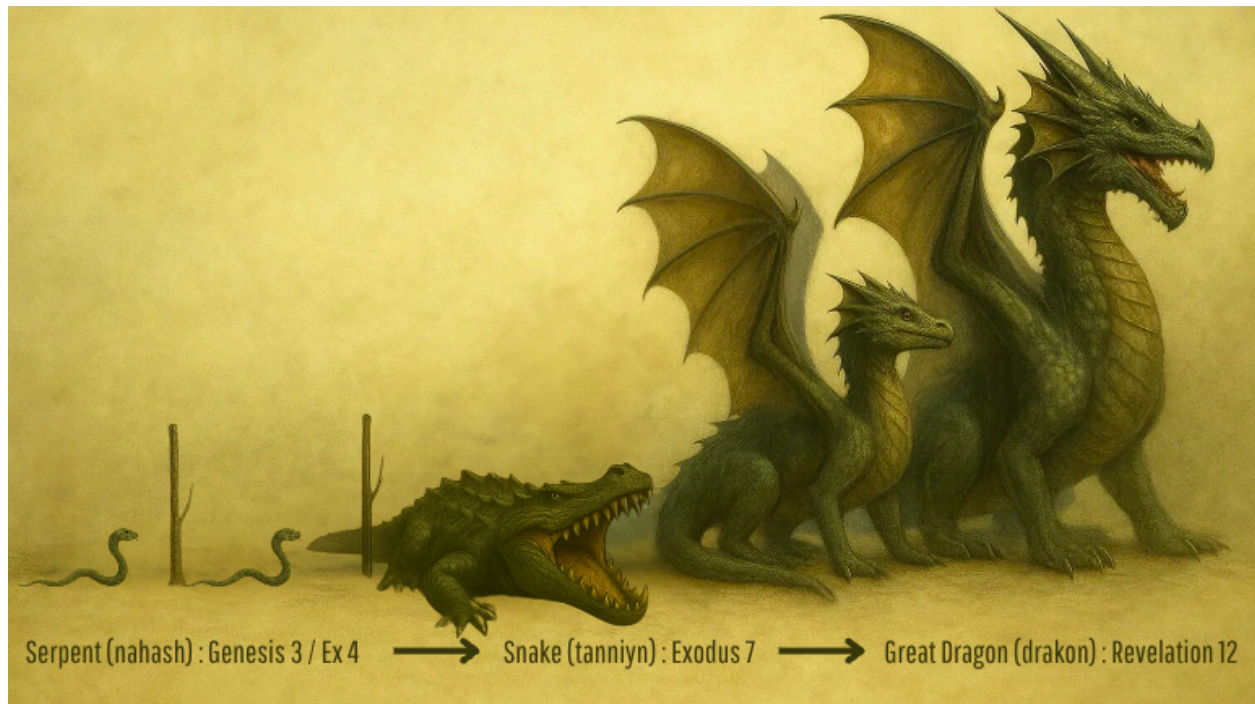
One fun and fascinating source that corroborates this interpretation can be found in classrooms all throughout Israel.

(DO NOT READ)



As you can see - the Hebrew word for snake is listed below the English - nahash. And also the word modern Hebrew speakers use for a crocodile today is listed - tanin.

This slide should help convey the broader picture.



We cannot know for certain what the beast looked like that came from Aaron's staff and the magicians' staffs, but what is clear is the progressive and growing power and threat of the enemy against the people of God - but also the rising power of Adonai to defeat the enemy regardless of the form he takes.

~

Adonai is able to play the enemy's game - and beat him at it.

What began as a snake in the garden, had now grown to something bigger. Adonai is able to turn a staff into a snake in Exodus 4. Then, Aaron's staff turned *tannin*, (dragon or sea monster, crocodile) devours the staffs turned tannin in the courts of Pharaoh. Eventually, by the time we get to Revelation - this beast has grown into a great dragon - and Adonai will hurl him into the lake of fire.

At no point does the enemy have the upper hand. Adonai demonstrates his superior power and authority all throughout history. The threat of the enemy is growing, but it is always outmatched by Adonai.

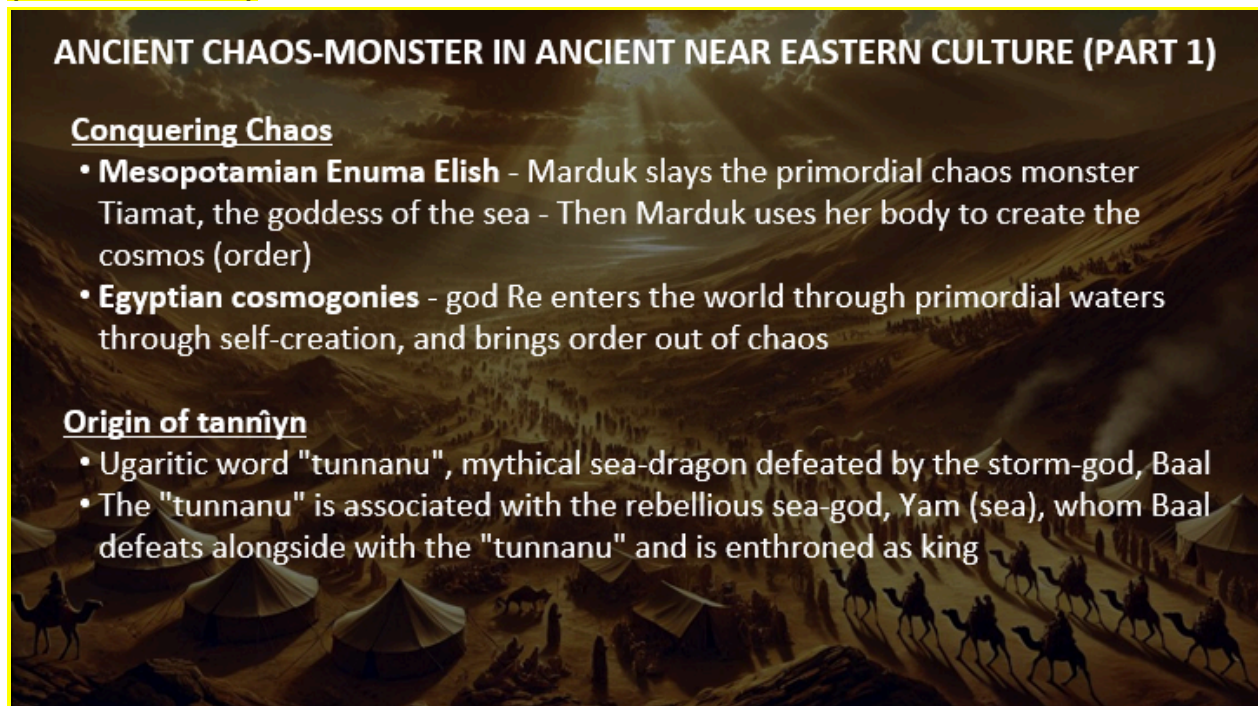
Was it a crocodile? We're not saying that it was is. The word Tannin is a broad term for creatures *like* snakes, crocodiles, dragons and giant sea monsters. It's likely it was something even more spectacular. But whatever it was - it was a lot closer to a croc than a simple snake.

No matter the form or power of the enemy, our God is greater, and He will always multiply His wonders to defeat the gods of this world and put them to everlasting shame.

~

Another aspect that we promised we would mention, is the association the tannîyn with the ancient chaos-monster in ancient near Eastern culture. For simplicity, we are going to look at a slide with our summary of the information we have gathered, but we will make the references available in our notes.

(READ SLIDE)



ANCIENT CHAOS-MONSTER IN ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN CULTURE (PART 1)

Conquering Chaos

- **Mesopotamian Enuma Elish** - Marduk slays the primordial chaos monster Tiamat, the goddess of the sea - Then Marduk uses her body to create the cosmos (order)
- **Egyptian cosmogonies** - god Re enters the world through primordial waters through self-creation, and brings order out of chaos

Origin of tannîyn

- Ugaritic word "tunnanu", mythical sea-dragon defeated by the storm-god, Baal
- The "tunnanu" is associated with the rebellious sea-god, Yam (sea), whom Baal defeats alongside with the "tunnanu" and is enthroned as king

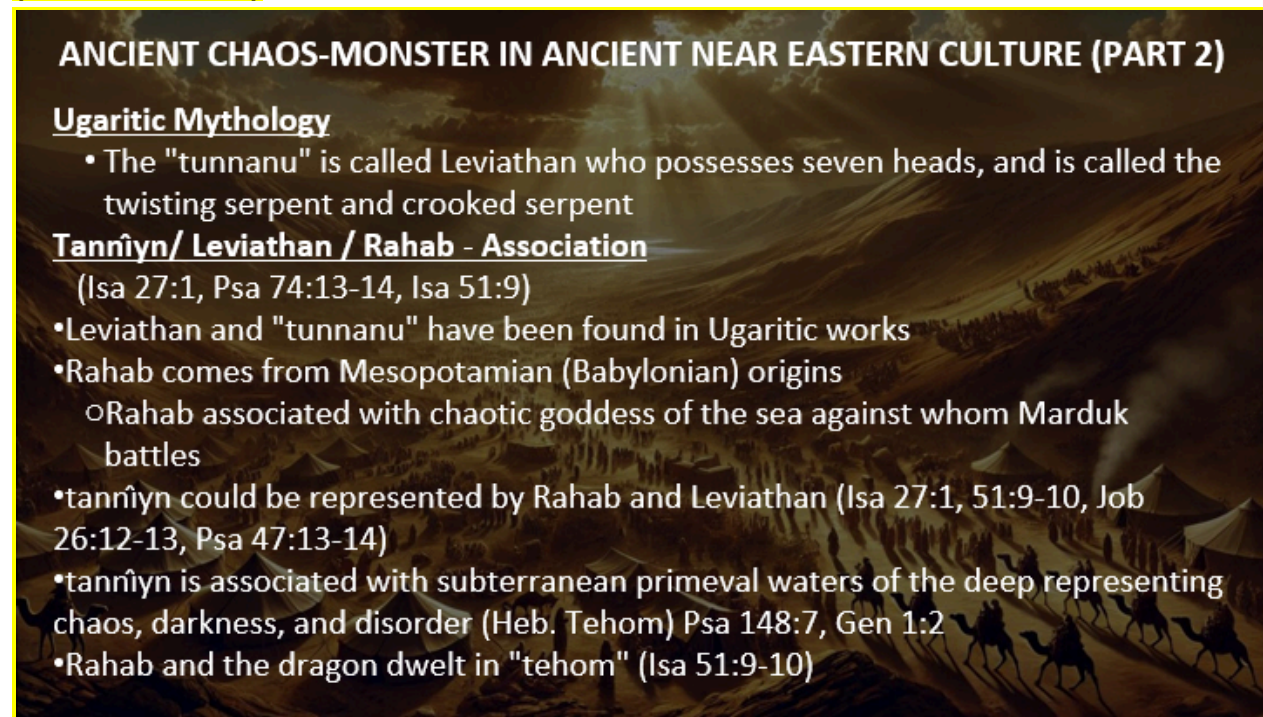
From this slide we can gather that in Ancient Near Eastern culture, such as Babylonian and Egyptian cultures, the greatest god would be the one that is able to overcome and destroy chaos, or the beastly-chaos monster and

then create order. The word tannîyn, employed in our text tonight finds its roots in the Ugaritic word "tunnu" which essentially also represented a chaos-monster in Ugaritic literature, which was defeated by the storm-god Baal.

~

Let's go to the second part of this slide:

(READ SLIDE)



ANCIENT CHAOS-MONSTER IN ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN CULTURE (PART 2)

Ugaritic Mythology

- The "tunnu" is called Leviathan who possesses seven heads, and is called the twisting serpent and crooked serpent

Tannîyn/ Leviathan / Rahab - Association

(Isa 27:1, Psa 74:13-14, Isa 51:9)

- Leviathan and "tunnu" have been found in Ugaritic works
- Rahab comes from Mesopotamian (Babylonian) origins
 - Rahab associated with chaotic goddess of the sea against whom Marduk battles
- tannîyn could be represented by Rahab and Leviathan (Isa 27:1, 51:9-10, Job 26:12-13, Psa 47:13-14)
- tannîyn is associated with subterranean primeval waters of the deep representing chaos, darkness, and disorder (Heb. Tehom) Psa 148:7, Gen 1:2
- Rahab and the dragon dwelt in "tehom" (Isa 51:9-10)

From this slide we can gather that in Ugaritic literature, the "tunnu" or the "tannîyn" is also found to be called Leviathan

In Babylonian literature, Rahab is the chaotic goddess that Marduk defeats

Biblically, and extra-Biblically, the association between the tannîyn , Leviathan, and Rahab is very strong, and they signify chaotic sea creatures that dwell in the depths of the sea.

Thus, the transformation of the staffs of Aaron and the magicians into tannin, and the devouring of the staffs of the magicians by Aaron's staff,

was intended to convey to the Egyptians that it is YHWH, the Most High God, who possesses the ultimate authority and dominion over the forces of chaos.

~

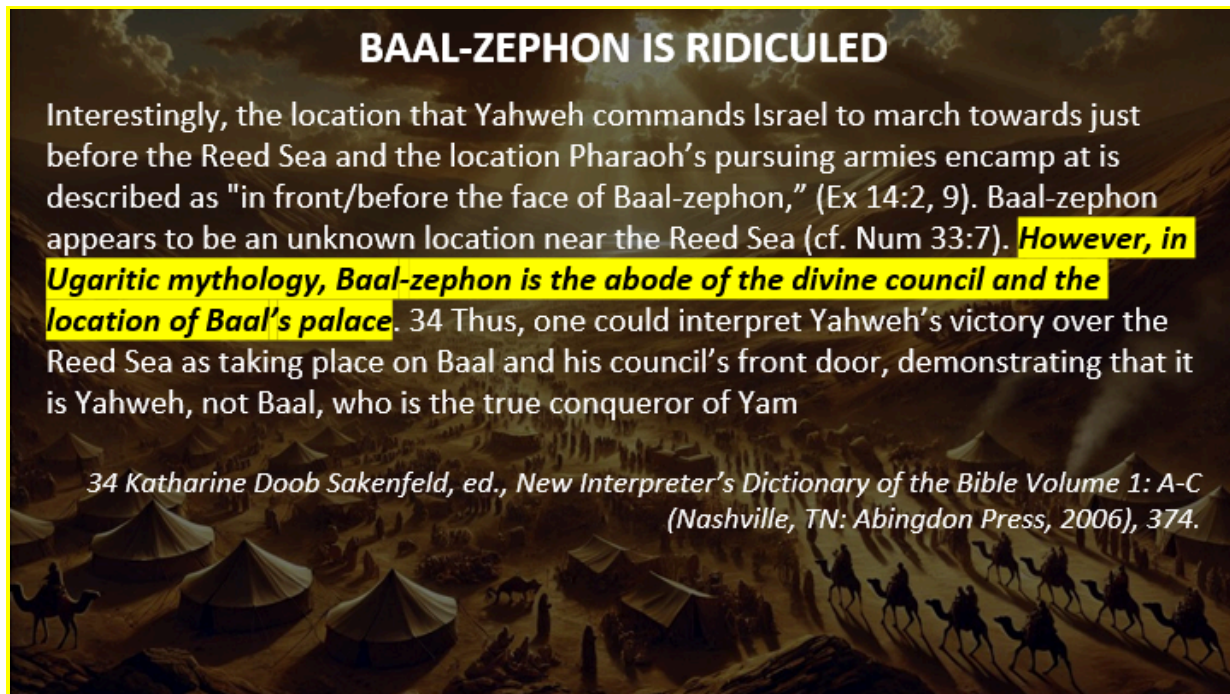
This is the beginning of Adonai's display of his ultimate power against all the gods of Egypt and the surrounding region. Let's look at a teaser for what is to come at the end of God's confrontation with Egypt.

(READ SLIDE)

BAAL-ZEPHON IS RIDICULED

Interestingly, the location that Yahweh commands Israel to march towards just before the Reed Sea and the location Pharaoh's pursuing armies encamp at is described as "in front/before the face of Baal-zephon," (Ex 14:2, 9). Baal-zephon appears to be an unknown location near the Reed Sea (cf. Num 33:7). **However, in Ugaritic mythology, Baal-zephon is the abode of the divine council and the location of Baal's palace.** 34 Thus, one could interpret Yahweh's victory over the Reed Sea as taking place on Baal and his council's front door, demonstrating that it is Yahweh, not Baal, who is the true conqueror of Yam

34 Katharine Doob Sakenfeld, ed., New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Volume 1: A-C (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2006), 374.



Simply put, not only is the confrontation tonight a direct attack at Pharaoh and the gods of Egypt, the location of the splitting sea will again be a direct confrontation on the doorstep of the gods of Egypt - baal zephon.

It is safe to say the Adonai is not pulling any punches.

He is here to win, and He demonstrates this overwhelmingly at every turn.

~

In our text tonight, the fact that the staffs turn into tannîyn is critical. In the ancient world, the one who has power over chaos is the most powerful of all the gods, or the Most High God, the king of the gods.

The fact that the staffs turn into creatures representative of the very chaotic forces Pharaoh is supposed to have power over is an outright challenge to Pharaoh's divine claim: **can you control the tannîyn?**

Then, for Aaron's staff to proceed to devour the other staffs is a VERY STRONG way of demonstrating that it is YHWH, not Pharaoh, who is the master over chaos; YHWH is God, Pharaoh and his gods don't stand a chance.

In fact, that YHWH has absolute dominance over chaos, and has the power to create order, OR unleash chaos is evident with the plagues that He will send upon Egypt. The plagues of Egypt are a very powerful demonstration of de-creation and unleashing of Tohu-va-vohu at Adonai's command. Consider that instead of light being given, darkness covers the land; instead of organization of the waters, they are turned into blood; instead of green trees being given for food, locusts devour vegetation.

The plagues demonstrate to Pharaoh that YHWH is the Most High God who truly has the power over chaos.

~

However, YHWH is not only the Most High God, able to bring chaos upon the recipients of His judgement, He is also able to bring order and grace to the recipients of His covenant mercies!

In the story of the Exodus, YHWH demonstrates his own power over chaos by making repeated allusions to Genesis 1, the creation story, where he demonstrates his dominion over tohu-va-vohu by bringing creative order. In Exodus 1, Israel is collectively stylized as an Adamic figure, being fruitful and multiplying.

Moses is similarly stylized as a Noahic figure, since he is delivered from a watery death by being placed in an ark. In Exodus 15:8, Moses describes the Israelites path as being through the primordial waters, which are conquered by the breath/spirit (or ruach) of God, reminiscent of the creation story in Genesis when the spirit or ruach of Adonai hovers over chaotic waters to bring about order!

However, for Pharaoh and the Egyptians, the same waters that were ordered for the Israelites to cross through the Red Sea, become chaotic once again to destroy the Egyptians! It is clearly evident that Pharaoh lacks the power of YHWH over the chaos-waters, the power to bring order to creation that YHWH demonstrates in Genesis and then again for His people here in the Exodus.

This is all of course prophetically announced at the duel of staffs, where YHWH proclaims that only He has mastery over chaos!

~

We know that we have stuffed you like an ox today, therefore we would like to give you a summary of the major points from this "Duel of Staffs"

(READ SLIDE)

DUEL OF STAFFS - CONCLUSIONS

1. The main idea demonstrated through this confrontation is that the staffs represented the authority and power of the gods in Egyptian culture. So, YHWH uses this custom to demonstrate His superiority in a palpable way to the Egyptians.
2. By the transformation of the staffs into tannîyn, YHWH is employing common mythic imagery for the primordial chaotic forces that threaten to undo the order of creation.
3. By Aaron's staff devouring Pharaoh's, YHWH is asserting that He alone possesses power over the forces of chaos (and order), and He alone is the Most High God.
4. This sign was a prophetic message of the chaotic forces that YHWH will unleash on Egypt through the 10 plagues and the parting of the Red Sea.
5. The themes of YHWH's power over the deep sea, his mockery of false gods, the sea as the location of terrifying wicked monsters, and YHWH's ultimate victory over the ancient serpent and dragon, are replete throughout the Scriptures and strengthen this interpretation.
6. After casting the great sea (chaotic) dragon into the Lake of Fire, John describes the new ordered creation simply by stating that "the sea was no more" (Rev 21:1)

We want to spend the remainder of our time illustrating to you the ongoing war that Adonai has been engaged in for ages and how it informs our future. Remember, the key to understanding the book of Revelation is understanding the book of Exodus.

In the midst of the time of Jacob's trouble, we are seeing a beastly Gentile nation that is ruled by a man who is under the influence of lesser gods, challenge Adonai through the oppression of his people.

~

In the midst of this struggle, Adonai is demonstrating his authority to Pharaoh through his triumph over the dragon and he is going to unleash a volley of miraculous signs and wonders to show the world that he is the Most high God.

- **Genesis 3:15 (ESV)**

15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

The very first conflict plainly stated in the Bible is between a serpent and mankind. Mankind is created in the image of God therefore the serpent is desirous of manipulating and oppressing them through sin.

God prophesies that the serpent would be at war with the seed of Man throughout the ages but it will culminate in the serpent being defeated by a Man.

- **Isaiah 51:9–10 (ESV)**

9 Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD; awake, as in days of old, the generations of long ago. Was it not you who cut Rahab in pieces, who pierced the **dragon**?

10 Was it not you who dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep, who made the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to pass over?

You can see that in every epoch of Biblical history, that God has been at war with this serpentine being.

~

- **Psalm 74:14 (ESV)**

14 You crushed the heads of Leviathan; you gave him as food for the creatures of the wilderness.

Again the Biblical authors are highlighting a struggle between ancient serpents or dragons that continues to have bearing in the present time.

- **Psalm 89:9–10 (ESV)**

9 You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, you still them.

10 You crushed Rahab like a carcass; you scattered your enemies with your mighty arm.

The biblical authors are noting that God shows his superiority by his dominance over the Dragon and the raging seas.

- **Isaiah 27:1 (ESV)**

1 In that day the LORD with his hard and great and strong sword **will** punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan the twisting serpent, and he will slay the dragon that is in the sea.

Isaiah is mentioning the ongoing struggle between YHWH and the "dragon" and saying that the struggle is ongoing and that there is a day in store where Adonai will finish this fight by totally destroying the Dragon and his influence over the peoples.

Also notice that Isaiah is predicting that God will have dominance over the chaotic sea that Leviathan lives in.

~

- **Revelation 12:16–17 (ESV)**

16 But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth.

17 Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And he stood on the sand of the sea.

Revelation presents this ongoing struggle and adds that the Dragon is furious toward the people of God and he is making war on them.

Did you notice where the Dragon is standing? God is going to deal with both the Dragon and the sea!

- **Revelation 13:4–5 (ESV)**

4 And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?"

5 And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months.

Much like the book of Exodus, the dragon is giving a beast authority and the ability to utter blasphemous words against God.

In the Bible, beasts represent Gentile nations who oppress God's people. We can see that Pharoah and Egypt is a perfect foreshadowing of what is to come as he is influenced by benign spiritual powers to blaspheme the Lord as his people.

~



- **Revelation 13:11–14 (ESV)**

11 Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. 12 It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed.

13 It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people, 14 and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who

dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived.

Not only does the Dragon give his beastly representative authority and a mouth to utter blasphemies, It gives it the authority to perform counterfeit miracles on the earth.

The Book of Exodus informs us of what this will look like. In the struggle between Adonai and the draconian Ruler of Egypt, Adonai is demonstrating his power over the dragon by doing incredible miracles and the response is to have counterfeit miracles performed.

All of these things will take place in the "time of Jacob's trouble" that is still to come. As we will see in a little bit, many will be deceived and harden their hearts in this time but Adonai will have final victory over the Dragon.

- **Revelation 20:2–3 (ESV)**

2 And he **seized the dragon**, that **ancient serpent**, who is the devil and **Satan**, and bound him for a thousand years,
3 and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

Revelation 20 and 12 both reveal the ancient dragon and connect it to all of the titles it has gone by throughout the Biblical Narrative.

~

The Ancient serpent is the dragon, who is the devil, who is Satan, the mastermind and orchestrator behind the rebellious front against Adonai's plan and authority.

In our chapter tonight, God is foreshadowing his ultimate victory over the Dragon during the time of Israel's greatest need. He is going to deliver them and at the same time swallow up the Dragon that oppressed his

people while showing his dominance over the chaotic seas that have been a problem since Genesis 1.

Remember, when Ezekiel was looking for a description for Egypt and Pharoah, he likened him to a dragon. Exodus and the miracle of the Red Seas could not be a better picture of what is to come in our future...

- **Revelation 21:1 (ESV)**

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

At the very end, the Dragon will be done away with, the chaotic seas will be done away with, and the people of God will be free to serve him like they were in the Garden of Eden, but without the serpent, and without the presence of Sin.

There will not be the possibility for any new figures to rise up to confront Adonai, because there will be no more "Sea" to produce them!

~

13 Yet Pharaoh's heart became hard and he would not listen to them, just as the LORD had said.

As we come to a close, notice that after all of this, Pharoah's heart was hard.

In the production of counterfeit miracles, he found the excuse and relief that he was looking for to discredit the authority that God possesses over the heavenly realm.

This will be no different in the days in the days to come...

- **2 Thessalonians 2:9–12 (ESV)**

9 The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all **power and false signs and wonders**, 10 and with all **wicked deception** for those who are perishing, because they refused to

love the truth and so be saved. 11 **Therefore God sends them a strong delusion**, so that they may believe what is false, 12 in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

In the discussion of Pharaoh hardening his heart vs. God hardening his heart, you will do well to understand that it is both.

Pharaoh refuses to love the truth and bow down to the Authority of YHWH and therefore God is giving him what he wanted, which is a hard, depraved, and deluded heart.

God is also using Pharaoh's own desires to produce what Adonai had always intended, a deliverance for his people and judgement on the gods of Egypt.

~

Before we end, we wanted to remind you that the sign given in the courts of Pharaoh was greater and more magnified than the sign that was given to Israel. Just like the signs that will be performed in the 2nd coming of Jesus will be greater than his miracles in this 1st.

Israel was given a sign of a staff turning into a snake and then back to a staff. Pharaoh was given a sign of a dragon that swallowed up the dragons of Egypt and rendered them powerless.

In the 1st coming of Jesus, his miracles were intended so that Israel will believe, Just like Moses' 1st miracles were intended for Israel to believe.

In the Second coming of Jesus, the miracles are greater but many do not believe, Just like Moses performs signs for Pharaoh and he does not believe.

In both of these occurrences, Israel will be saved and there will be Gentiles that join them, but there will also be many who find relief and harden their hearts...

- **Revelation 9:20–21 (ESV)**

20 The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshipping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk,
21 **nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.**

- **Revelation 16:8–11 (ESV)**

8 The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to scorch people with fire.
9 They were scorched by the fierce heat, and they cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues. They did not repent and give him glory.
10 The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom was plunged into darkness. People gnawed their tongues in anguish
11 and cursed the God of heaven for their pain and sores. **They did not repent of their deeds.**

- **Revelation 16:21 (ESV)**

21 And great hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, fell from heaven on people; and they **cursed God for the plague of the hail**, because the plague was so severe.

~

Those who are in right relationship with the God of Israel will endure the great "Time of Jacob's trouble" and continue to serve him while maintaining a repentant heart.

Those who do not obey the Gospel, will refuse to repent even while the God of Israel is clearly demonstrating his power and Authority.

We suggest to you that the key to victory in any amount of trouble and the eventual participation in the ultimate victory over the Dragon is dependent on your ability to repent and repent well.

If your heart is hard and stubborn and in you are in the habit of avoiding the intimate revealing of your heart in repentance, then no sign from God will be enough proof to get you to turn... If you are maintaining a pure heart by continuously producing the fruit of repentance, then every sign of God will be a sign of Hope that he will eventually slay the dragon in your life.