

Good Evening, TAC! Tonight promises to be a special night for several reasons! You are going to see the Book of Exodus in a way that you have never seen it before! Tonight, we will round out Chapter 7, where we will begin to see the judgment on the gods of Egypt and the beginnings of the deliverance of the people of Israel simultaneously. A major theme of the book of Exodus is the Sovereignty of Adonai and how He is able to work in all things to bring about His will for His people.

In tonight's text, we will cover verses 14 to 25 of Exodus 7, where we will encounter the first of the ten plagues that will fall upon Egypt. Before we do that, we're going to zoom out so we can see the plagues in their proper context of the entire scope of the book of Exodus and the Torah as a whole. Then we'll take a look at some of the purposes and nuances of the plagues of Egypt in an overview format. This will help us understand what God was aimed at with the plagues. To do so, we will recall some of our earlier slides and concepts to paint a contiguous narrative and get a running start into our chapter tonight.

~

Do you remember this slide?

(READ SLIDE)

“AND”
cont...

(literally “And”) connects this book to Genesis and records the fulfillment of Gen. 15:13–16; 46:3–4; 50:24. Both Leviticus and Numbers begin the same way, proving that the Pentateuch was originally one book.

Finis Jennings Dake, The Dake Annotated Reference Bible (Dake Publishing, 1997), Ex 1:1.

The Hebrew title, Sefer ve'eleh shemot, “the book of ‘And these are the names’ ” (usually abbreviated to Shemot, “Names”), is based on the opening words of the book. Exodus, in its present form, is not an independent book, but part of the Torah which narrates the story of Israel from the creation of the world through the death of Moses. The Torah in its final form is divided into five separate books simply because ancient scrolls could not contain a work of that length.

Exodus: Introduction and Annotations (שמות). In A. Berlin & M. Z. Brettler (Eds.), The Jewish Study Bible (p. 102). Oxford University Press.

Given that the Hebrew title of the book begins with "AND", the intended message is to convey to us that the Books of Genesis & Exodus are not separate works with a few connections, but are, in fact, one book. What we find in the book of Genesis is further expanded in the Book of Exodus, as written by one author, Rabbi Moshe.

~

As we have progressed throughout our studies together, you have undoubtedly seen many connections between the books of Exodus and Genesis. Many of the events that take place in the lives of the patriarchs in Genesis are patterns that are further expanded in the nation as a whole. As these patterns unfold in the Book of Exodus, they form a key to interpreting the Book of Revelation.

One of the major themes that has continued from Genesis to Exodus is the Time of Jacob's Trouble. We will see this expand even further

as we find its fulfillment in the book of Revelation.

So far, you have been taught from the book of Exodus that in the time of Jacob's trouble, we see many interesting details that point to patterns that increase in their magnitude throughout the Biblical Narrative.

We have seen the struggle between God and the lesser gods of the heavenly council. We have seen the desperate attempts of the heads of nations to oppress the people of God to display their perceived dominance over the Most High God. We have seen the satanic attempt to use psychological warfare to keep the people of God from seeking him, and we have also seen Adonai display his dominance over beastly dragon-like creatures.

~

We have come to learn that these details are inserted by the wisdom of the mind of God and the unction of the Holy Spirit to inform us of the end of the ages, where we will find these details occurring again, but on a much larger scale. To remind you of some of the things that we have covered so far, take a look at this next slide.

(READ SLIDE)

DEUTERONOMY 32 WORLD VIEW

Exodus 12:12 - Adonai is judging the gods of Egypt.

Deuteronomy 32:8-9 - The nations are divided based on the number of the Sons of God.

Daniel 10:18-21 - Persia, Greece have rival spiritual powers over them.

Psalms 82:1-4 - Adonai is presiding in judgment over the lesser gods.

Psalms 89:6-11 - Adonai is supreme over all heavenly beings; none can be compared to Him.

Job 15:15 - Even the heavens are impure and there are angels that Adonai doesn't trust.

Job 4:18 - Adonai charges angels with error, as some are not trustworthy.

2 Peter 2:4 - Disobedient angels are locked away in Tartarus for the day of judgment.

Hebrews 9:23-24 - The Heavens had to be purified; Jesus presented his blood for purification.

Isaiah 24:21-22 - Like 2 Peter 2, the host of heaven will be punished for their disobedience.

~

In our teachings so far, we have briefly covered the extent to which the Bible discusses the conflict that exists between God and the other "lesser" gods that seek to thwart his plans and exalt themselves over Adonai.

You should remember that we discussed the ramifications that exist on Earth due to the effects of this heavenly struggle.

We have seen in the book of Exodus how this struggle has a major impact on the people of Israel, as they bear the brunt of the opposition, which manifests physically in the form of heads of nations being used by malignant spiritual forces.

In our story, Israel has faced the most brutal of circumstances, only because they are chosen by God to be His treasured nation, which He has kept in reserve for Himself. Anytime a nation wants to exalt itself over Israel, it is because the spiritual power over that nation seeks to exalt itself over God. This attack on his people caused God

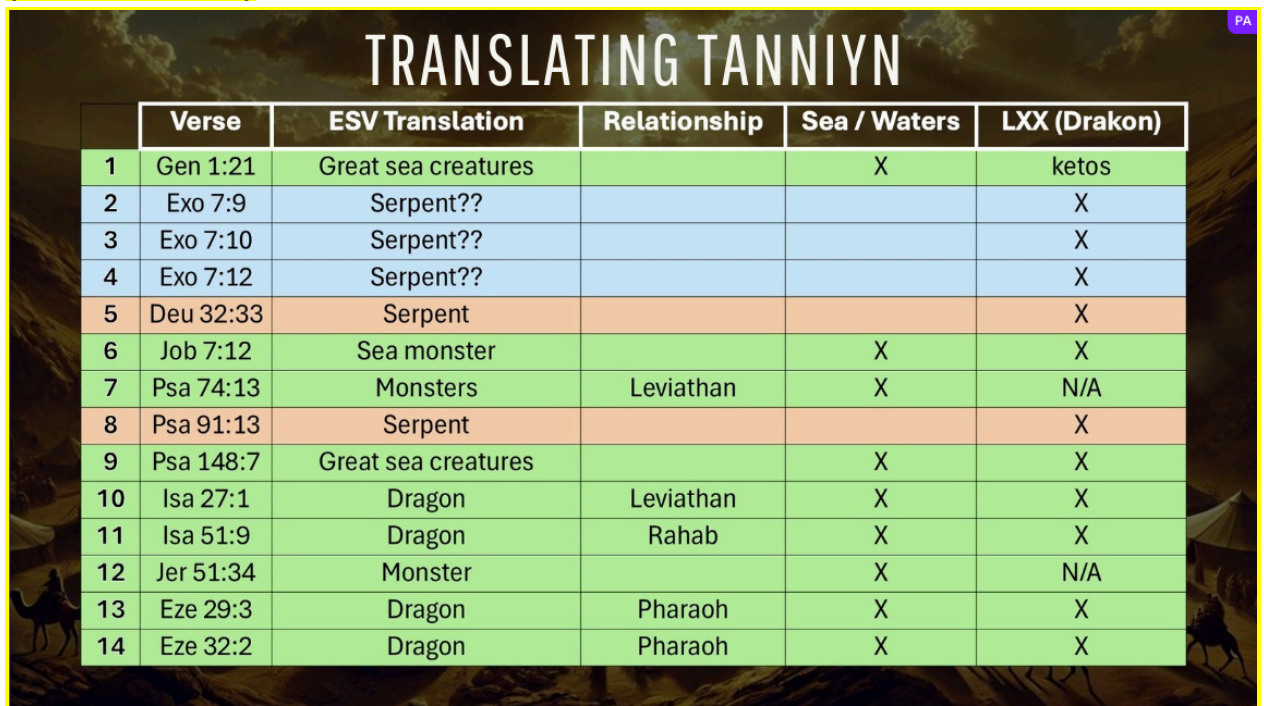
to "come down" and declare what he himself will do to rescue his people while demonstrating his power to the known world through supreme acts of dominance over Israel's aggressors and their handlers.

~

Last week, we saw in the book of Exodus the emergence of a figure that is shrouded in mystery and much suspicion. We saw the mention of the ultimate "handler" of Egypt, and every other power that emerges to exalt itself over Adonai—the tanniyn —and we saw Adonai's dominance over it.

To review this subject, refer to the next slide, where we have created a table outlining the common translations of the word 'tanniyn' throughout the Bible.

(READ SLIDE)



	Verse	ESV Translation	Relationship	Sea / Waters	LXX (Drakon)
1	Gen 1:21	Great sea creatures		X	ketos
2	Exo 7:9	Serpent??			X
3	Exo 7:10	Serpent??			X
4	Exo 7:12	Serpent??			X
5	Deu 32:33	Serpent			X
6	Job 7:12	Sea monster		X	X
7	Psa 74:13	Monsters	Leviathan	X	N/A
8	Psa 91:13	Serpent			X
9	Psa 148:7	Great sea creatures		X	X
10	Isa 27:1	Dragon	Leviathan	X	X
11	Isa 51:9	Dragon	Rahab	X	X
12	Jer 51:34	Monster		X	N/A
13	Eze 29:3	Dragon	Pharaoh	X	X
14	Eze 32:2	Dragon	Pharaoh	X	X

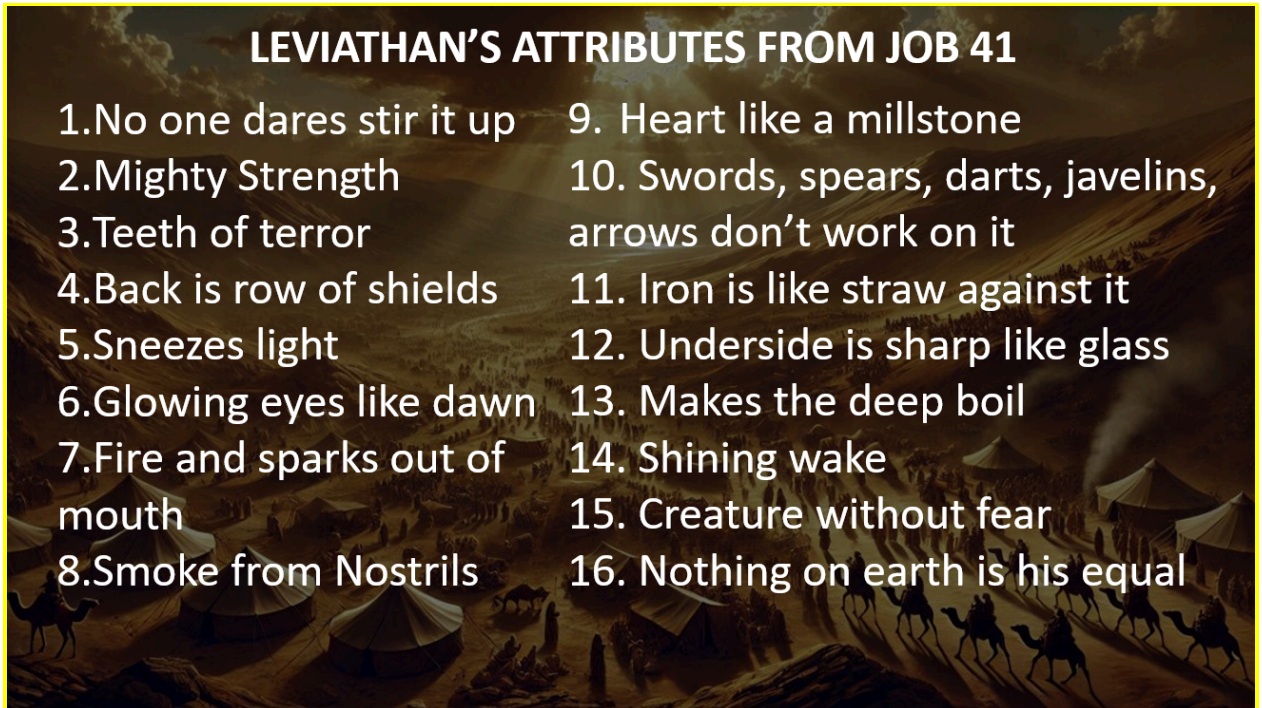
~

The most common translation of the term "tanniyn" has something to do with a creature that is much more than your typical garden snake.

This creature is most frequently seen in the chaotic waters of the seas, or even worse, lurking in the deep. You should be aware that the Greek translation of the Older Testament uses the term "dragon" to describe the tanniyn, and the same Greek word is used to describe the dragon in the book of Revelation that is influencing beastly Gentile nations and making war on the people of God.

To give you further insight into the attributes of this creature, take a look at this next slide on the description of Leviathan because he often shows up in the same passages as the tanniyn.

(READ SOME OF THEM)



LEVIATHAN'S ATTRIBUTES FROM JOB 41

1.No one dares stir it up	9. Heart like a millstone
2.Mighty Strength	10. Swords, spears, darts, javelins, arrows don't work on it
3.Teeth of terror	11. Iron is like straw against it
4.Back is row of shields	12. Underside is sharp like glass
5.Sneezes light	13. Makes the deep boil
6.Glowing eyes like dawn	14. Shining wake
7.Fire and sparks out of mouth	15. Creature without fear
8.Smoke from Nostrils	16. Nothing on earth is his equal

~

Because Leviathan is likened to a tanniyn, we can infer that the creature discussed in Exodus 7 is more than a simple garden snake.

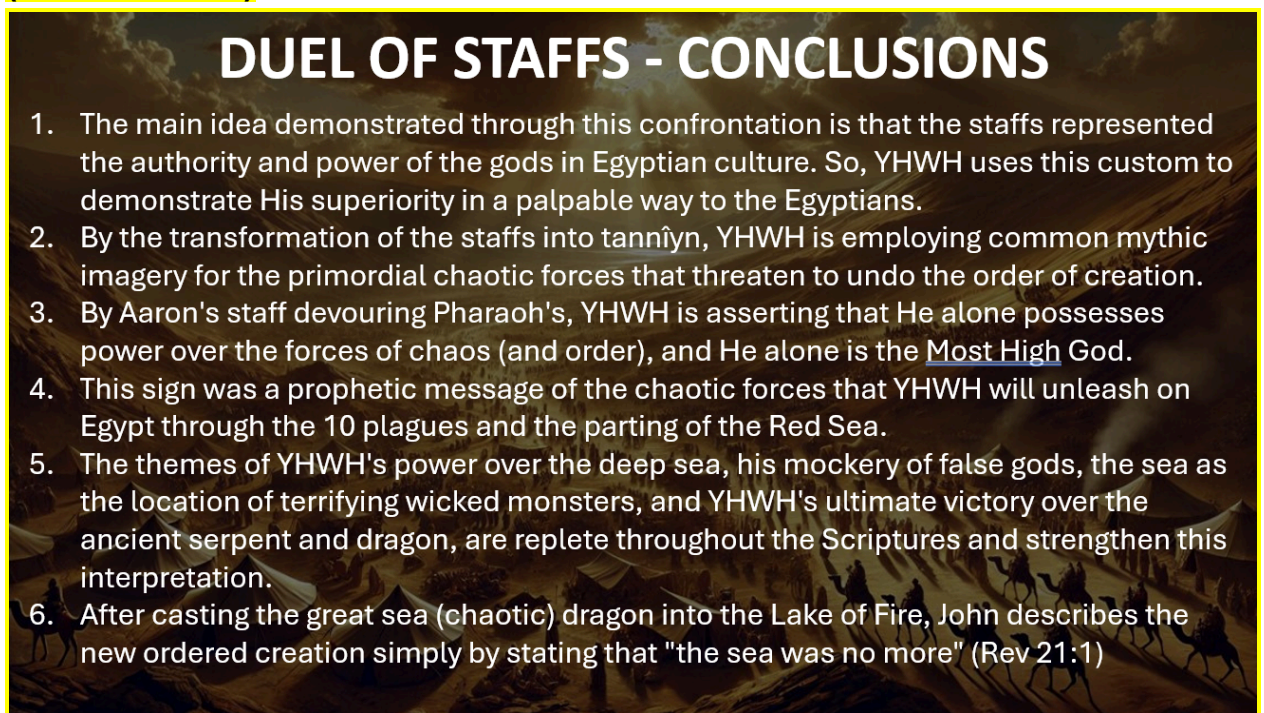
Furthermore, we have seen that the author of the Book of Exodus chooses to use the word "Tanniyn" in the duel of the staffs instead of

the normal word that could have been used, which would be "nachash".

This suggests that the inclusion of the tanniyn in the duel of the staffs is an intentional foreshadowing of what God will do to ultimately punish the dragon in the time of Jacob's Trouble and triumph over the chaotic waters that once dominated the earth.

On this next slide, you will see our conclusions on the Duel of Staffs and its intended meaning.

(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 tanniyn, 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)

~

This interaction between Moses, Aaron, Pharaoh, and the magicians was not one of the plagues that God unleashed on the entire nation of Egypt to make himself known. It was a personal demonstration and a sign given to Pharaoh in a way that he would be intimately familiar with.

This sign was intended to convey God's ultimate power and authority over everything that Pharaoh and his gods were supposed to be in control of.

Furthermore, we even gleaned from the writings of virtually all surrounding pagan cultures that they were aware of an existing problem concerning a chaotic sea dragon and their gods.

While the Bible is not primarily focused on countering the mythologies of pagan cultures, its numerous references to the Chaos Monster suggest that other cultures recognized Biblical Truths and attempted to claim Adonai's glory by asserting their gods' dominance over the tanniyn.

This further highlights the point that Adonai is trying to make by making himself known to all the earth through what he is going to do to Egypt and Israel.

~

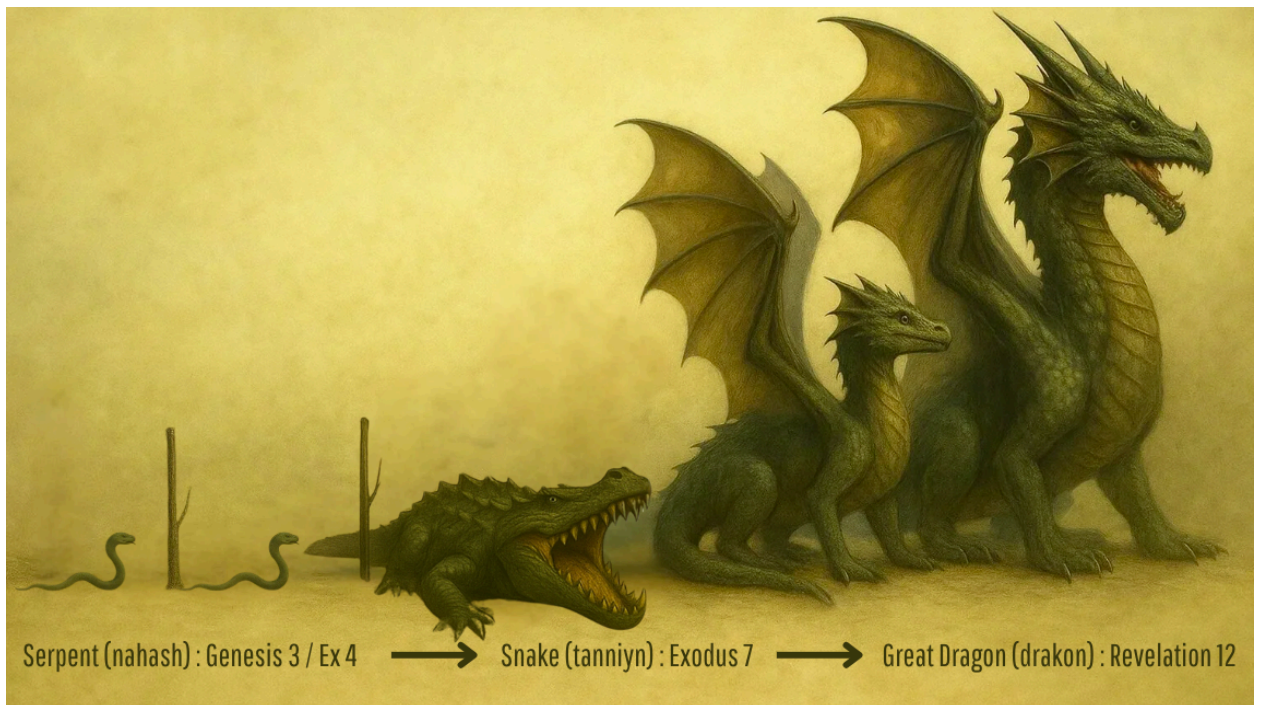
In the next slide, you will see the continuity of the conflict between God and the Dragon as it occurs Biblically.

(READ SLIDE)

DRAGON WAR

Genesis 3:15	In the beginning of the Bible a conflict between a serpent and God's creation.
Isaiah 51:9-10	God was in conflict with a dragon in days of old.
Psalms 74:14	God crushed the heads of Leviathan in an age-old conflict.
Psalms 89:9-10	God is presented as ruling over the raging seas and crushing Rahab or being in conflict with Rahab in the past.
Isaiah 27:1	God will defeat Leviathan and the dragon in the future.
Rev 12:16-17	There is a dragon that is making war against the people of God and ultimately God himself.
Rev 13:4-5	The dragon gives authority to gentile nations to blaspheme God.
Rev 13:11-14	The same dragon gives authority to gentile nations to work miracles and to deceive people.
Rev 20:2-3	The dragon is seized. The serpent, dragon, devil, and Satan are all revealed as the same entity throughout the biblical narrative.
Rev 21:1	The dragon is done away with in the chaotic seas and the chaotic seas cease.

In the Book of Exodus, we gain additional details about the age-old struggle between God and the serpent, or the ancient dragon, which is the devil or "Satan," and what that conflict will look like in the future.



~

As we summarized last week - 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 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.

The sign that is given to Pharaoh is a projection and prediction of what will happen to his kingdom and all kingdoms that come after him who seek to exalt themselves over God and his people.

In the coming chapters of the Book of Exodus, we will see that Adonai continues his relentless demonstration of his total authority over creation and his unceasing ability to harness both chaos and order as he pleases.

~

Tonight, we are going to take a look at the first plague that God unleashes upon the land of Egypt. However, before that, we will examine the 10 plagues as a whole, so that you can gain an overview of their intended significance.

As we pray, let's ask Adonai to open the eyes of our hearts so that we may behold his majesty and power!

~

Read 7:14-25

Pray

As we begin our overview of the plagues, we would like to introduce a slide that will be referenced frequently throughout our studies in the Book of Exodus.

(DO NOT READ)

PLAGUES: OVERVIEW				
	PLAGUE	Time	Area of attack	Means of administration
1.	WATER TO BLOOD	morning	comfort	Aaron's staff
2.	FROGS	not specified	comfort	Aaron's staff
3.	GNATS	not specified	comfort	Aaron's staff
4.	FLIES	morning	possessions	Hand of God
5.	LIVESTOCK	not specified	possessions	Hand of God
6.	BOILS	not specified	possessions	Hand of God
7.	HAIL	morning	mortality	Moses' staff
8.	LOCUSTS	not specified	mortality	Moses' staff
9.	DARKNESS	not specified	mortality	Moses staff
10.	DEATH OF THE FIRST BORN	not specified		

As you look at this slide, notice that the plagues are grouped into sets of three, determined by the cycles of warnings present for the first two plagues, followed by a third plague with no warning.

The sequence would repeat as follows: Warning, warning..... No warning. Then warning, warning,..... No warning.

You should also notice that throughout the plagues, one of the major determinations by God was to make a distinction between Israel and Egypt.

You can see this thought reflected in:

- **Exodus 11:7 (ESV)**
- 7 But not a dog shall growl against any of the people of Israel, either man or beast, that you may know that the LORD makes a **distinction between Egypt and Israel.**

Given that the struggle depicted in the Book of Exodus is brought on

by warring factions in the heavens, God seeks to clearly define the people who belong to Him by saving them from the distress of the plagues while defining the people of Egypt by casting harmful plagues upon them at the same time.

~

The Apostle Peter, when commenting on the last days, says this:

- **2 Peter 2:8–9 (NIVUK84)**
- 9 if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.

In the Book of Exodus, God demonstrates His ability to show Himself powerful by bending the rules of nature to punish the disobedience of Egypt, while at the same time continuing to bend the laws of nature further by causing His people to be unaffected by those same supernatural wonders.

Peter is commenting on the last days and saying that the trouble that comes upon the earth will be no different. The righteous and the unrighteous will both be on the earth, witnessing the awesome and terrifying power of God as He judges the earth. However, the righteous will be saved through the judgment, while the wicked will perish in it.

- **Matthew 24:37–41 (NIVUK84)**
- 37 As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.
38 For in the days before the flood, **people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage**, up to the day Noah entered the ark;
39 and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.
40 **Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other**

left.

41 Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

When commenting on the last days, Jesus mentions that they will be like the days of Noah, when the people on the earth will be consumed with their day-to-day affairs, showing no concern for the impending judgment that is coming.

In those days, Jesus mentions that while men and women are going about their business, one (presumably righteous) will be left standing, and one (wicked) will be taken away in the judgment. This seems to indicate a 1 out of every 2 effect... (More on this later).

~

In our first overview, examining the plagues in Exodus as a whole, it is essential to understand that the people of God do not escape all hardship associated with God's judgments, even if they are directed at someone else. If I ground one of my sons from his car because of his sin, I am affected by the judgment on his life because I may have to drive him, but the hardship that is coming upon me is not because of my sin. That doesn't mean that I am sinless, but rather that someone else's sin that brings judgment creates hardship for everyone around them. Israel and believers have always been delivered through hardships, not from them.

- **Matthew 10:17–22 (NIVUK84)**
- 17 “Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues.
18 On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles.
19 But **when** they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say,
20 for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

21 "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child;
 children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death.
 22 All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.

Jesus, speaking about the normative path for all believers, never mentions that the people of God will be able to avoid the trials and judgments of God that are to fall on the earth. His message was "If we stand firm to the end", we will be saved.

PLAGUES: OVERVIEW				
	PLAGUE	VERSES	WARNING	DISTINCTION
1.	WATER TO BLOOD	Ex 7:14-25	warning	NOT STATED
2.	FROGS	Ex 8:1-15	warning	NOT STATED
3.	GNATS	Ex 8:16-19	no warning	NOT STATED
4.	FLIES	Ex 8:20-32	warning	ISRAEL
5.	LIVESTOCK	Ex 9:1-7	warning	ISRAEL
6.	BOILS	Ex 9:9-12	no warning	NOT STATED
7.	HAIL	Ex 9:13-35	warning	THOSE WHO HEED WARNING
8.	LOCUSTS	Ex 10:1-20	warning	NOT STATED
9.	DARKNESS	Ex 10:21-29	no warning	ISRAEL
10.	DEATH OF THE FIRST BORN	Ex 12:29-32	warning	THOSE WHO PUT BLOOD ON THE DOOR

~

Like the Israelites in Egypt, the people of God will not be unaffected by the severe trials that God unleashes on the earth, nor will they be able to escape their effects.

The Lord will preserve his people through the plagues and make a distinction between them and the wicked through it, but the idea that the people of God will come out completely unscathed is at least misleading and at most harmful to your faith.

As you look at this slide you will see that some plagues affected the Israelites and some don't! For your sake, there is a difference between being affected by difficulty or discipline, or being afflicted by it. All of these would have *affected* the Hebrews to some extent, although they were not necessarily *afflicted* by the plagues. For example, in the instances that say "not stated", we do not know for sure the affects it had on Israel. In particular, plague 6 is fascinating. It does not specify that the Hebrews DID NOT get boils, but it's also hard to imagine God punishing the Hebrews with horrible boils while he is trying to deliver them and make them distinct.

~

Additionally, the distinctions are not only between Hebrew/Egyptian. In the case of the hail, Moses instructs Pharaoh to warn all of Egypt of the impending hailstorm so they can be spared. Some Egyptians, including some of Pharaoh's officials, heed the warning and bring their livestock out of the fields. Lastly, in the final plague of the firstborn, the distinction

Christians have a duty, while in the judgments of God, to be distinct from the world. Your hope should not be in escaping the hardships that are coming upon the world, but instead in displaying a faith-filled, heavenly perspective in the midst of trials that points the rest of the world to the Word of God and His faithfulness through every difficulty.

As followers of Christ and those who share in the faith and hope of Israel, we must not become accustomed to thinking that God will spare us from any trial, but instead we must endeavor to count it as a joy to endure the coming trials as righteous overcomers who will be saved much like Israel was saved after the 10 plagues!

~

To take a further look at how God makes a distinction between his people and the Egyptians, take a look at this next slide because what God does for the people of Israel is the antithesis of what God does to the people of Egypt.

(READ SLIDE)

ANTITHESIS: EGYPT VS. ISRAEL		
	Plagues on Egypt	Antithesis (Israel)
1	Blood makes water undrinkable (Ex 7:21)	Rock provides drinkable water (Ex 17:6)
2	Wild creatures destroy (Ex 8)	Serpent saves (Num 21:9)
3	Livestock killed (Ex 9:6)	God brings forth quail for food (Ex 16:13)
4	Hail & fire rains down to destroy crops (Ex 9:23-25)	Manna rains down from heaven to provide food (Ex 16:14-15)
5	Captives of darkness (Ex 10:21-23)	Delivered from captivity by pillar of fire (Ex 13:21-22)
6	Firstborn killed (Ex 12:29-30)	Firstborn redeemed (Ex 13:1-2)
7	Drowned in Red Sea (Ex 14:27-28)	Delivered through the Red Sea (Ex 14:29-31)

-
- You should be able to see from this slide how God can both save and judge through the same acts.

~

This again is the demonstration of Adonai to be the true commander of the creation and a display of his ability to manipulate the laws of nature to show himself as the one having power over the heavens and the earth that cannot be overruled.

- **Isaiah 43:11–13 (NIVUK84)**
- 11 I, even I, am the LORD, and apart from me there is no savior.
12 I have revealed and saved and proclaimed— I, and not some foreign god among you. You are my witnesses,” declares the LORD, “that I am God.
13 Yes, and from ancient days I am he. **No-one can deliver out of my hand. When I act, who can reverse it?”**

In the chapter of Isaiah 43, God begins this admonition by

commenting on the future Exodus, stating that when Israel passes through the waters again, He will be with them.

God then goes on to reveal His intention in performing His mighty acts on behalf of His people. He says that he alone is the one who has the power to save, WHILE no one can deliver out of his hand when he is rendering judgment.

In both cases, God is showing himself to be the only one who can perform irreversible acts that both save and judge at the same time.

~

With that being said, we want to show you another slide so that you can get an additional look at the 10 plagues as a whole.

(DO NOT READ)



As you look at this slide, notice again the patterns of 3s that group each plague. Remember that these groups of 3s are determined by the pattern of warning, warning, and then no warning.

As you examine these groupings of threes, you can start to see the escalation in the severity of plagues. The first three plagues, consisting of blood, frogs, and gnats, only seem to affect the comfort of the Egyptians. The next three begin to affect the possessions of the Egyptians and the last three begin to usher in death at an increasing level.

Additionally, as the plagues increase, Pharaoh and his officials are increasingly desperate for relief as what starts as a request for prayer from Moses turns into desperate cries.

Finally, you should see that the groupings of 3's all feature the plagues being performed by a different member of the team of 3 that is working in conjunction to reveal the will of the Father. Aaron takes the 1st grouping, God takes the second and Moses takes the third.

~

Of course, all of these are performed by the Power of God and not the strength of Man, but the text seems to go out of its way to illustrate a three-stranded chord working in conjunction.

On the topic of the escalation of the severity of the plagues, remember that we told you that the Time of Jacob's trouble is likened to labor pains in the Bible. The labor pains continue in intensity right up until the point of birthing.

This is clearly revealed in the book of Revelation, where there is an increasing severity of the plagues that fall on the earth, with a greater magnitude.

We will delve into this more in a few minutes, but for now, we want to highlight a few additional details concerning the plagues as a whole and their intended effect on the Egyptian worldview.

~

On the following slides, we will provide you with historical information on the Egyptian concept of "Ma'at," which means "universal order."

This concept is particularly relevant because the 10 plagues as a whole challenge the idea of who holds the power of order and chaos on the earth.

(READ SLIDE)

Egypt and Ma'at pt. 1

“Ma'at was the “cosmic force of harmony, order, stability, and security ... and the organizing quality of created phenomena.” It may be simply defined as **universal order**” It was a dynamic force not limited to the initial structure of creation, but always necessary because “the voracity of the forces of chaos continued to menace the very existence of the created world.”

Consequently, the Egyptians strove to maintain ma'at in their earthly existence. **In ancient Egypt, the king had the duty to maintain ma'at; he was considered the personification of universal order.** Every Pharaoh had the obligation to reestablish and reaffirm ma'at upon accession to the throne. The forces of chaos could upset ma'at, so at the advent of a new king, order had to be restored. The importance of ma'at for Egyptian kingship should not be underestimated. The idea of ma'at played a central role in the king's identification with the god Horus. **Restoring and maintaining this harmony were imperatives for the Egyptian king, expectations that befit his office as the son of Re and the god-king**

It is well attested that in Egyptian culture, the Pharaohs derived their status of importance from the concept that they would be able to control the universal order of creation and maintain it in balance, preventing it from becoming chaotic.

~

(READ SLIDE)

Egypt and Ma'at pt. 2

When Yahweh assailed Egypt with the ten plagues, he was casting the universal order of creation (ma'at) into chaos. This was a direct challenge to the power and sovereignty of Pharaoh: could he maintain ma'at or not? Could he by divine utterance ("Thus says Pharaoh," Exod. 5:10) hold together the universe and hold off the onslaught of Yahweh? That he could not underscores the main purpose of the plague account: "to challenge this basic concept [ma'at] by showing that the Pharaoh was powerless before the God of the covenant, Yahweh (Exod. 12:12)." The plague account was an unmasking of Pharaoh. He was not a deity, and he certainly did not control the operation of the universe. Yahweh is sovereign.

"Ancient Egypt and The Old Testament" - John D. Currid, 1997, Baker Academic

YHWH could have demanded that Pharaoh release his people and then stunned the entire nation of Egypt with blindness as he walked the Israelites out of their country - but he didn't.

The Plagues themselves feature the increasing detriment of the chaotic unleashing of destruction for the specific purpose of causing a distinction between the Israelites and the Egyptians, and at the same time, to demonstrate that Adonai is the Most High God who alone can harness the universal order of creation and can transform it into chaos and back into order as he pleases.

~

You should be able to recognize the design and intentionality in the plagues as God demonstrating in a bold fashion that he is the creator and there is nothing that anyone, whether in the heavens or earth, can do to stop him.

Before we examine our next slide, let's review one passage to gain a better understanding of the God of Israel and what He is trying to

accomplish through the scope of the 10 plagues.

- **Isaiah 40:28 (ESV)**
- 28 Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.

The Bible plainly states that Adonai is the creator of everything, whether in the earth or in the heavens.

This gives him alone the ability and power to manage creation in any way that he sees fit. In all the discussions of the scientific possibilities and rational explanations of "miracles" and supernatural phenomena, faithless apologists often forget that God is not bound by what man can conceive as possible, nor is He threatened by other lesser gods' attempts to steal His thunder.

God alone has the ability to create, order, and orchestrate His creation as He sees fit, and He has the ability to de-create by unleashing chaos as He wishes.

~

In fact, let's take a look at another slide, because the 10 plagues as a whole display God's ability to create in an orderly fashion and then de-create to prove that He is the exalted ruler and sovereign architect of the universe!

(READ SLIDE)

CREATION VS. DE-CREATION

CREATION DAY	CREATION DESCRIPTION	PLAGUE ON EGYPT	PLAGUE DESCRIPTION
Day 1 Gen 1:1-5	Light created out of darkness	Plague 9 Ex 10:21-29	Darkness prevailing over light
Day 2 Gen 1:6-8	Ordering and separation of the waters	Plague 1 Ex 7:15-25	Chaos and destruction brought by the changing of water into blood
Day 3 Gen 1:9-13	Appearance of dry land and creation of vegetation	Plagues 7-8 Ex 9:18-10:20	Destruction of vegetation by hail and locusts
Day 4 Gen 1:14-19	Creation of luminaries	Plague 9 Ex 10:21-29	Darkening of luminaries
Day 5 Gen 1:20-23	Creation of birds, fish, and swarming creatures in the sea	Plagues 1-2 Ex 7:15-8:15	Death of fish; multiplication and death of frogs
Day 6 Gen 1:24-31	Creation of land animals and humans	Plagues 3-4: Ex 8:16-24 Plague 5: Ex 9:1-7 Plague 6: Ex 9:8-17 Plague 10: Ex 11-12	Pestilence of insects; anthrax; boils on beasts and humans; destruction of firstborn

Currid, J. D. (1997). Ancient Egypt and the Old Testament (p. 115). Baker Books.

You can see that God's act of creation featured an order that addressed every area of creation, including light/darkness, waters, vegetation, birds, fish, land, animals, and humans.

As we have seen earlier, the Egyptians prided themselves on their perceived ability to maintain these things in their intended balance of order. However, God is actually the originator and regulator of these constants.

~

In the Book of Exodus, you can see God's intentional acts of "de-creating" his creation by disrupting and unleashing chaos on every area of creation.

What is even more fascinating is that throughout the plagues, God is showing Himself to have the ability to turn order and chaos on and off as He pleases, as if it were a light switch!

As you consider this, realize how incredible it is that every time we see the transition from Chaos to Order or Order to Chaos, God is

using this transformation to create something new! For instance, take a look at:

- **Genesis 1:1–2 (ESV)**
- 1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.
2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

In the very first lines of the Bible, we are introduced to a new creation that God brought into existence. Then, in verse 2, the earth is described as being in a state of chaos and destruction. In fact, Isaiah 45:18 tells us that God did not create the earth in this state, indicating that something destructive had occurred.

Through this transition from order to chaos, God begins to use the circumstances to initiate a new creation, bringing order from the chaos.

~

You can see the extent of this in:

- **Genesis 1:26–27 (ESV)**
- 26 Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”
27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

In the midst of the transition from order to chaos and then back to order, God used these events to **create Adam**, the first man, who would be given the responsibility to do his will on the earth.

This pattern begins with Adam but is not limited to Adam alone.

The **next Adamic figure** that we see in the Bible is Noah, who lived during another De-creation event that he was preserved through, so that God could use him to participate in a "new creation" on the earth and continue his will being done.

The **next Adamic figure** that we see in the Bible would be the Nation of Israel. Again, in the book of Exodus, you see that through the intentional act of taking creation and then "de-creating" it by orchestrating chaos, God's aim was to create a new creation with the Nation of Israel, and they would be tasked with doing His will on the earth.

~

This then brings us to the **Last Adam**... Take a look at:

- **1 Corinthians 15:45–46 (ESV)**
- 45 Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.
46 But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual.

In this passage, Jesus is portrayed as the next figure in the Adamic pattern that we have seen since the book of Genesis.

Notice that it does not call Jesus a "second Adam", but rather, he is called "**the last Adam**", meaning that there were other Adamic figures before him, but he is the last.

Jesus Christ was born into a world of Chaos and destruction, but he was given to the world by God to begin a new creation that would eventually result in the earth having permanent order and shalom.

In fact, in Matthew 10:34, Jesus mentions in his first coming that he did not come to bring order to the earth, but instead he came to bring disorder, or, in another way, "de-creation." Jesus' ministry on earth disrupted the natural order of society, so that people would realize

their need for salvation and cry out to Him for a new birth.

His first arrival on earth initiated this process for all humanity, and his last arrival on earth will also feature the de-creation of the entire earth, but he will also be the one who restores creation and establishes permanent order!

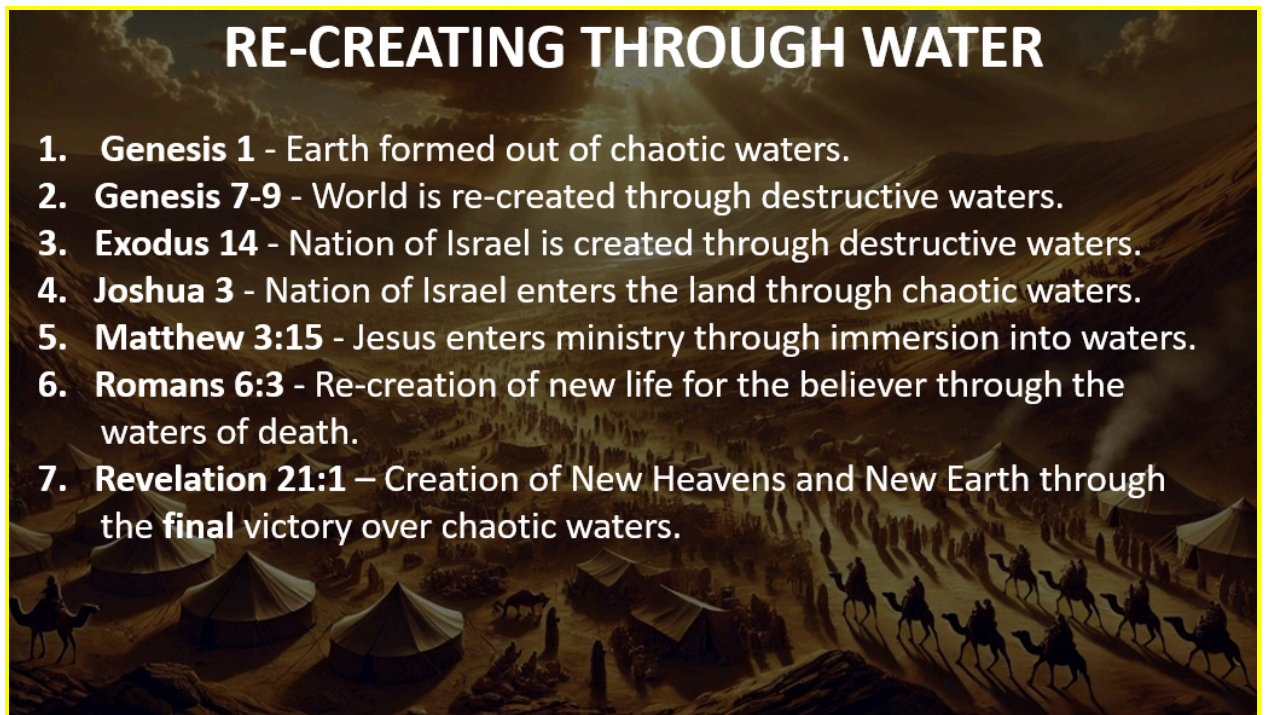
This happens for new believers. God initially brings a sword to de-create a life that is dying so that new life can be brought forth and take over.

~

In our text, the book of Exodus is one segment in the Adamic Pattern, where God uses de-creation and re-creation simultaneously to birth a new nation.

On the next slide, we will show you how the transition from de-creation to re-creation often features chaotic waters that give way to the birth of a new realization of God's will on Earth.

(READ SLIDE)



RE-CREATING THROUGH WATER

1. **Genesis 1** - Earth formed out of chaotic waters.
2. **Genesis 7-9** - World is re-created through destructive waters.
3. **Exodus 14** - Nation of Israel is created through destructive waters.
4. **Joshua 3** - Nation of Israel enters the land through chaotic waters.
5. **Matthew 3:15** - Jesus enters ministry through immersion into waters.
6. **Romans 6:3** - Re-creation of new life for the believer through the waters of death.
7. **Revelation 21:1** – Creation of New Heavens and New Earth through the final victory over chaotic waters.

The Biblical pattern is that through water, the old creation is done away with and the new creation comes.

However, the culmination of the ages features not only the final victory over the chaotic waters through which the new heavens and earth come, but also the destruction of the present heavens and earth!

~

The apostle Peter addresses scoffers who question the veracity of this final creation event:

- **2 Peter 3:5–7 (ESV)**
- 5 For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the **earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God**, 6 and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. 7 But by the same word **the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire**, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

There is a culmination to this re-birth process and victory over the chaotic waters in which the present heavens and earth are destroyed by fire, and a new heavens and earth are created in which the chaotic sea is no more!

Now, to begin to tie several things together, the ordering of the 10 plagues on the nation of Egypt is a demonstration to the rulers on the earth and the lesser gods in the heavens that Adonai is exalted above them.

His ability to de-create and then re-create shows that he is the master of creation.

His ability to rule over the dragon demonstrates that he alone has the

ability to subdue the problematic antagonist that has threatened the earth and the territories ruled by lesser spiritual powers.

His ability to not only harness the chaotic waters but also to use them to do his will by creating new things from them shows that he is not just a manipulator of creation, but rather, he is the one that creation bends its will to bow down to!

~

To further illustrate this point, the pattern of plagues and de-creation is established in the Torah and will find their final culmination in the book of Revelation.

We have shown you so far that the key to understanding the book of Revelation is found in understanding the book of Exodus... While we have gleaned many examples from the Book of Exodus that repeat in Revelation, we want to provide an outline of the plagues and explore their significance in relation to the events depicted in the Book of Revelation.

(READ SLIDE)

PATTERN OF THE PLAGUES: EXODUS TO REVELATION		
	Exodus Plagues	Revelation Plagues
1.	Nile to blood	Rev 8:8-9-Sea to blood Rev 16:3 - Sea to blood Rev 16:4 - Rivers & Springs to blood
2.	Frogs	Rev 16:12-14- Unclean spirits like frogs
3.	Gnats	N/A: No Parallel Found
4.	Flies	N/A: No Parallel Found
5.	Livestock	N/A: No Parallel Found
6.	Boils	Rev 16:2 - Malignant sores
7.	Hail & Fire	Rev 16:18- Lightning, thunder, earthquake, hailstones
8.	Locusts	Rev 9:3-4 - Locusts like horses
9.	Darkness	Rev 16:10 - Beast's kingdom plunged into darkness
10.	Firstborn	N/A: No Parallel Found

As you can see, the book of Revelation features many of the same plagues that are in the Book of Exodus, but at an increased magnitude.

We tried to see if we can find gnats, flies, livestock, and the death of the firstborn in the book of Revelation and what we can say is yes and no...:), While we cannot find the exact same wording, what we can see is that Joel does mention that the destruction will be like annoying bugs that are somewhat like gnats, we know that there will be flies because valleys will be littered with bodies, we can bet that A LOT of livestock will die, and you can be sure that there will be a lot of firstborns dying in those times.

~

Being able to recognize that the Book of Revelation features many of the same plagues that are in the Book of Exodus causes you to take special note of what Revelation mentions that the Book of Exodus does not!

Take a look at this next slide.

(READ SLIDE)

CHAOS



- o Shalom removed from the earth (Rev 6:4)
- o People slaying one another (Rev 6:4)
- o Famine, Pestilence, Death by wild beasts (Rev 6:8)
- o 1/4 of earth's population dies - 2 billion compared to WW2 55 million 36x higher. Killed by plagues (Rev 6:8)
- o Earthquakes (Rev 6:12)
- o Sun becomes black (Rev 6:12)
- o Moon is like blood (Rev 6:12)
- o Stars falling to the sky (Rev 6:13)
- o Every mountain and island removed from its place (Rev 6:14)
- o Sky rolls up like a scroll (Rev 6:14)
- o All on earth hiding in caves (Rev 6:15)
- o Great star falling (Rev 8:10)
- o Third of Sun/Moon/stars pummeled (Rev 8:12)
- o Another 1/3 of mankind killed by angels. Another 2 billion, 1 out of every 2 (Rev 9:15)
- o Battles with blood rising 6 ft high (Rev 14:20)
- o Solar flares torching people on earth (Rev 16:8)
- o Mass Beheadings (Rev 20:4)

As we have said before, the Book of Revelation is the final fulfillment of everything that is prophesied from Genesis onward.

As you can see in this slide, similar to the plagues in Exodus, the judgments that fall on the earth increase in severity.

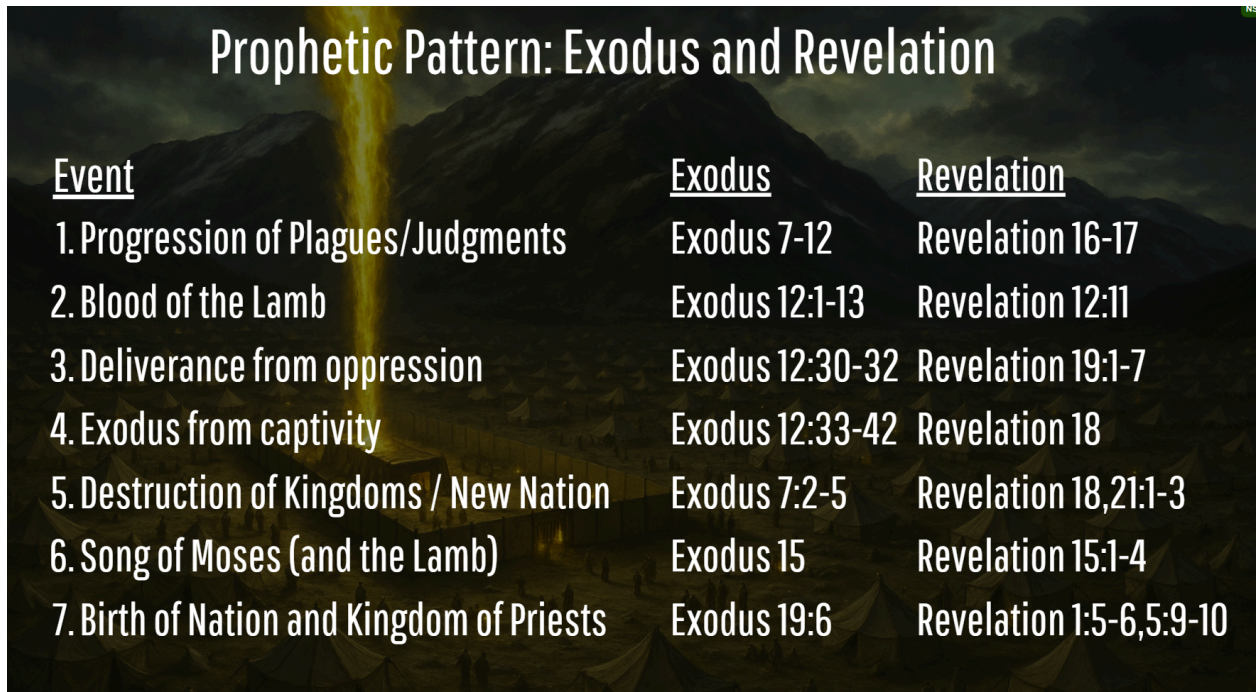
Also in the Book of Revelation, the judgments that befall the earth increase in overall magnitude to produce a cataclysmic event "such has not been from the beginning of the world until now, and never will be."

Throughout these events, God will do the same for the people of God and the world as he did for Israel and Egypt. He will both judge the world and preserve the righteous through those judgments and finalize his work by birthing a new creation from the ashes of de-creation!

~

On this next slide, you will see that even the ordering of the sequence of events is the same in Revelation as it is in the Book of Exodus.

(DO NOT READ)



<u>Event</u>	<u>Exodus</u>	<u>Revelation</u>
1. Progression of Plagues/Judgments	Exodus 7-12	Revelation 16-17
2. Blood of the Lamb	Exodus 12:1-13	Revelation 12:11
3. Deliverance from oppression	Exodus 12:30-32	Revelation 19:1-7
4. Exodus from captivity	Exodus 12:33-42	Revelation 18
5. Destruction of Kingdoms / New Nation	Exodus 7:2-5	Revelation 18,21:1-3
6. Song of Moses (and the Lamb)	Exodus 15	Revelation 15:1-4
7. Birth of Nation and Kingdom of Priests	Exodus 19:6	Revelation 1:5-6,5:9-10

As we examine this slide together, remember that the book of Exodus is the seed book expanded, and Revelation is a fully formed tree.

- We walk through the plagues in Egypt, seeing an escalation which sets proper expectation for the global impact of God's judgments in Revelation 16-17.
- The blood of the Passover Lamb saves the lives of the firstborn in Egypt and it is the blood of the Lamb that causes the saints to overcome in the end times.
- In Exodus 12, the people of Israel are finally released from the oppression they have experienced in Egypt, but in Revelation 19, the saints are delivered from the oppressive powers they have been resisting for millennia.
- The Lord draws His people out of the nation of Egypt in Exodus 12, and in Revelation, His people are drawn up and out from every nation, which are all encompassed in Babylon.

- The de-creation of Egypt gives birth to the new nation of Israel, just as the de-creation of the kingdoms of this world will give way to the Kingdom of our God as He sets up His rule and reign alongside His people in the New Jerusalem.
- Coming out of Egypt and through the divided waters produces the Song of Moses, a song of deliverance sung by the Israelites. In Revelation 15, all of the saints, along with the heavens, will sing the song of Moses and the Lamb upon their deliverance.
- The deliverance from Egypt brought about the establishment of a new nation that would become a kingdom of priests. In Revelation, this vision is expanded and fulfilled, making one new man out of Jew and Gentile, uniting heaven and earth under the reign of the Messiah, who will establish a kingdom of priests to oversee His global rule.

• ~

From this point forward in our teaching, we hope that you will now be able to appreciate and gain further insight into the design of the Book of Exodus and the design of the 10 plagues as a whole.

Over the past weeks, we've explored the figure of the *tannîyn* and its associations with the serpent, Leviathan, and the dragon—symbols of dark, wild, and chaotic forces often linked with a primordial sea monster.

We've also shown that in the ancient world—particularly in Babylon, Egypt, and Canaan—the greatest god was understood to be the one who could conquer chaos and establish order in the cosmos.

Since we have thrown a lot at you, let us quickly remind you about Ma'at:

(Read the first paragraph)

Ma'at & Chaos

"Ma'at was the 'cosmic force of harmony, order, stability, and security ...It may be simply defined as universal order...always necessary because 'the voracity of the forces of chaos continued to menace the very existence of the created world.' In ancient Egypt, the king had the duty to maintain ma'at; he was considered the personification of universal order. The forces of chaos could upset ma'at...Restoring and maintaining this harmony were imperatives for the Egyptian king, expectations that befit his office as the son of Re and the god-king.

When Yahweh assailed Egypt with the ten plagues, he was casting the universal order of creation (ma'at) into chaos. This was a direct challenge to the power and sovereignty of Pharaoh:... The plague account was an unmasking of Pharaoh. He was not a deity, and he certainly did not control the operation of the universe. Yahweh is sovereign.

"Ancient Egypt and The Old Testament" – John D. Currid, 1997, Baker Academic

We have shown you multiple major cultures, whose mythology follows this same pattern:

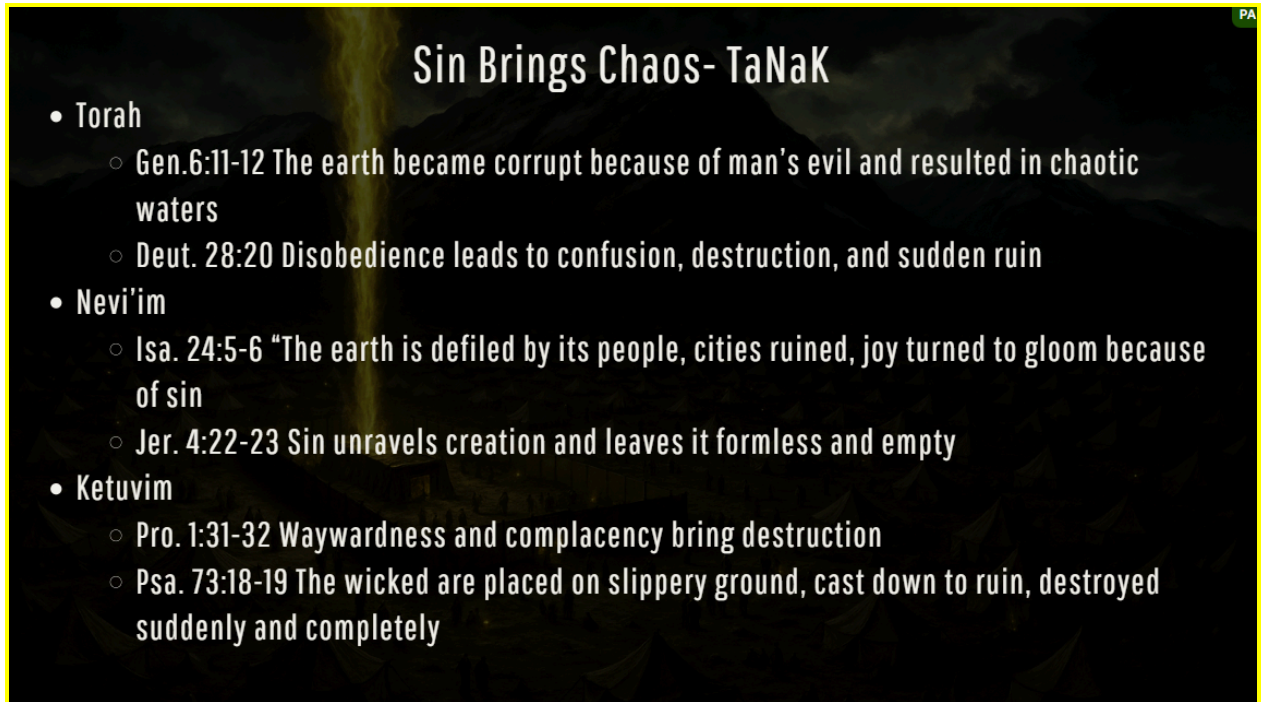
- In Babylon, their god marduk SUPPOSEDLY killed the sea monster goddess Tiamat.
 - In Egypt, their god Re SUPPOSEDLY emerged from chaotic waters and created order, which Pharaoh was supposed to keep.
 - And in Canaan, where Israel was going, the storm god Baal SUPPOSEDLY defeated Yam, the sea god and tunnanu a chaos sea dragon.
 - ~
- So whatever god can defeat the chaos monster is the greatest god...

All these cultures had a problem...chaos kept happening. Why?
Because chaos is not actually a monster in the sea, chaos results from sin.

Let us walk you through law, prophets and writings in the old and new

of how sin brings chaos.

(DO NOT READ)



Sin Brings Chaos- TaNaK

- Torah
 - Gen. 6:11-12 The earth became corrupt because of man's evil and resulted in chaotic waters
 - Deut. 28:20 Disobedience leads to confusion, destruction, and sudden ruin
- Nevi'im
 - Isa. 24:5-6 "The earth is defiled by its people, cities ruined, joy turned to gloom because of sin
 - Jer. 4:22-23 Sin unravels creation and leaves it formless and empty
- Ketuvim
 - Pro. 1:31-32 Waywardness and complacency bring destruction
 - Psalms 73:18-19 The wicked are placed on slippery ground, cast down to ruin, destroyed suddenly and completely

Starting in the Torah

- **Genesis 6:11–12**
- “Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight and was full of violence. God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways.”

As you well know from our Genesis study, at this point, man's thoughts were only evil all the time, his sin had filled the world and the result would be chaotic waters of judgment bursting forth to destroy all life.

- **Deuteronomy 28:20**
- “The LORD will send on you curses, confusion and rebuke in everything you put your hand to, until you are destroyed and come to sudden ruin because of the evil you have done in forsaking him.”

When Moses communicated to the Israelites the blessings for obedience and the curses for disobedience or "consequences for sin" the result would be curses, confusion, destruction and sudden ruin...chaos.

~

Nevi'im (Prophets)

- **Isaiah 24:5–6**

- “The earth is defiled by its people; they have disobeyed the laws, violated the statutes and broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore a curse consumes the earth; its people must bear their guilt. Therefore earth’s inhabitants are burned up, and very few are left.”

The result of disobeying the laws of God, not just for Israel but for everyone, is a curse upon the earth that results in the majority of the earth's inhabitants being burned up and very few being left...chaos.

- **Jeremiah 4:22–23**

- “My people are fools; they do not know me. They are senseless children; they have no understanding. They are skilled in doing evil; they know not how to do good. I looked at the earth, and it was formless and empty; and at the heavens, and their light was gone.”

A people skilled in doing evil bring about tohu va-vohu...formlessness, emptiness, disorder and chaos.

~

Ketuvim (Writings)

- **Proverbs 1:31–32**

- “They will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes. For the waywardness of the simple will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them.”

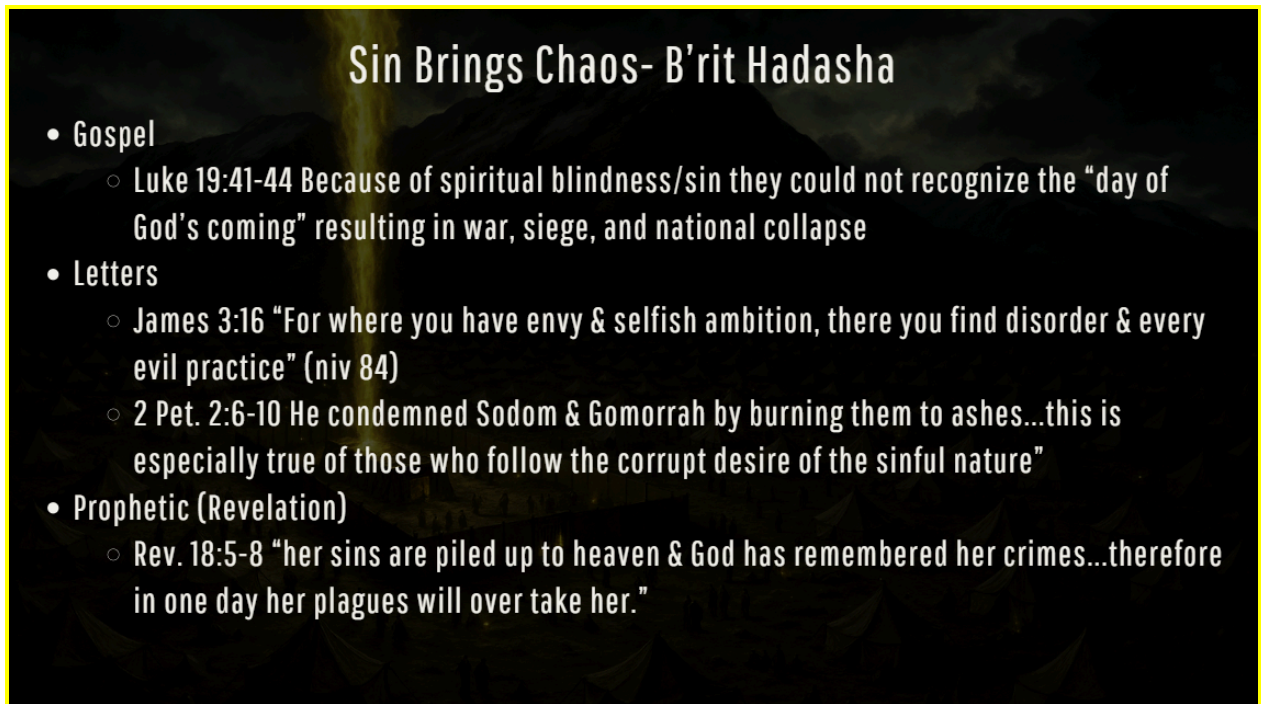
The fruit of the wayward and complacent, the simple and the foolish

will be destruction.

- **Psalm 73:18–19**
- “Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin. How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors!”

The wicked are on slippery ground and will be cast down to ruin with sudden and complete destruction.

(DO NOT READ)



Sin Brings Chaos- B'rit Hadasha

- Gospel
 - Luke 19:41-44 Because of spiritual blindness/sin they could not recognize the “day of God's coming” resulting in war, siege, and national collapse
- Letters
 - James 3:16 “For where you have envy & selfish ambition, there you find disorder & every evil practice” (niv 84)
 - 2 Pet. 2:6-10 He condemned Sodom & Gomorrah by burning them to ashes...this is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature”
- Prophetic (Revelation)
 - Rev. 18:5-8 “her sins are piled up to heaven & God has remembered her crimes...therefore in one day her plagues will over take her.”

~

Gospels

- **Luke 19:41–44**
- “As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, ‘If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to

the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you.”

We have discussed at length the day of God's visitation that Joseph foretold and all Israel and Egypt are experiencing in our studies in Exodus. Here, Jesus makes it clear that God has come to them once again but they cannot see it because it is hidden from their eyes. The result of their blindness and sinful state will be a war, a siege and national collapse. It is not that God is sending chaos, He is sending judgment as a result of sin.

~

Letters

- **James 3:16**
- “For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.”

This verse makes it clear that disorder and sin are linked together. When men choose sin they are choosing its consequences and the inevitable conclusion of sin is chaos. When chaos comes upon a person, a people, or the planet, it is God who is giving people over to the rulership of sin in their lives.

- **2 Peter 2:6–10**
- “If he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)— if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment. This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature and despise authority.”

The story of Sodom and Gomorrah was chaos. The peoples' sin had piled up to the heavens and the result was total devastation. They serve as an example according to the scripture of what will happen to those who follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature and despise authority.

~

Prophetic (Revelation)

- **Revelation 18:5–8**
- “For her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes. Give back to her as she has given; pay her back double for what she has done. Mix her a double portion from her own cup. Give her as much torture and grief as the glory and luxury she gave herself. In her heart she boasts, ‘I sit as queen; I am not a widow, and I will never mourn.’ Therefore in one day her plagues will overtake her: death, mourning and famine. She will be consumed by fire, for mighty is the Lord God who judges her.”

In perhaps the clearest representation in this list of scriptures, the entire world is being held responsible for the sins they have committed which are piled up to heaven and just like what is happening in Egypt but on a much grander scale, her plagues will overtake her, the result is death, mourning, and famine. She will be consumed by fire.

This scripture string makes it abundantly clear that sin produces chaos. So then what we see with these nations all looking for someone to defeat the chaos monster, is actually for someone to come along who can decisively deal with sin and its effects. Pharaoh cannot maintain Ma'at because he himself is perpetuating sin that produces chaos, we are watching it unfold in this Chapter. Marduk, Re, Baal can't do it because they cannot free their people from their sins. Only a God who has power to free His people from their sin can

actually bring order out of chaos.

- **Colossians 1:15–20 (NIV)**

- ¹⁵ The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

~

Christ came to conquer sin and the chaos it brings, he did so by becoming the very sin that bound us. Much like a staff thrown down, so Jesus came down from the Father, only to be transformed and to transform us.

- **2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV 1984)**

- “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

God demonstrated His power over sin and its affects by becoming a sin offering...only to take up His life again and ascend to the right hand of the Father, exalted above every other power.

Truly death is swallowed up in victory and Jesus our Prince of Peace has demonstrated His authority over chaos.

~

Before we examine the first plague, take a look at:

- **1 Corinthians 10:11 (ESV)**
- 11 Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the **end of the ages has come**.

You should now have a better understanding of how the Biblical writers of the 1st century were able to look at what was done in the past to find instruction for their day and the days to come.

When Paul mentions that the end of the ages has come upon us, he is referring to the fact that we are in the final stage of human history, awaiting the imminent unveiling of the Apocalypse.

For us in this room, it is worth noting that we have progressed further into this stage than Paul did, which means we are closer to the Great Tribulation than he was.

As we continue through the book of Exodus, we will take special note of what it means to be a believer who endures the judgments of God falling on the earth and stands firm to the end!

~

Exodus 7:14–25 (NIVUK84)

14 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Pharaoh’s heart is unyielding; he refuses to let the people go.

15 Go to Pharaoh in the morning as he goes out to the water. Wait on the bank of the Nile to meet him, and take in your hand the staff that was changed into a snake.

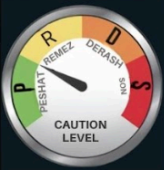
As we progress into the first plague, notice that God instructs Moses to take with him the staff that he turned into a snake.

The word that is used here for snake is Nachash and not Tanniyn.

This is an intentional recall to the signs that were given to Moses and Aaron to display for Israel and how those signs will expand and find further significance in their intended message to the Egyptians.

In Exodus 4, we discussed the three signs that Moses was given for him and Aaron to perform for the people of Israel, so that they would find comfort in knowing that God was the one who sent them to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Egyptians.

(DO NOT READ)

	Sign 1 Snake/Staff	Sign 2 Leprosy/Healed	Sign 3 Water / Blood
Peshat	Sign to believe	Sign to believe	Sign to believe
Remez	Israel cast down and lifted up	Israel's works are stricken and restored	The blood of Israel within the Nile is accounted for and remembered
Derash	Death to Life (Individuals)	Death to Life (Household)	Death to Life (Nation)
Sod	Jesus became sin so that when lifted up we might become the righteousness of God	Jesus was at the Father's side, the nation regarded him as despised, scorned, and rejected, but he entrusted his Spirit to the Father's hands, and was revealed as resurrected and whole	Jesus is the water and aroma of life to those who receive him, but also judgment and death to those who reject him

The 1st sign was the staff being cast down, turning into a snake, and then being turned back into a staff in the hands of Moses. The Israelites would have seen this as a sign that they had been cast down to the ground and that God would pick them back up again and restore them.

This sign is replicated and then magnified when it is performed in front of Pharaoh. When performed before Egypt, the staff becomes a tanniyn, which is greater than a snake and then swallows up the

staffs of Pharaoh's magicians.

~

When the sign was performed before Israel, restoration was the intended message; when the sign was performed before Egypt, domination was the intended message. Not only was the sign increased in its magnitude, but it was being magnified to show the total exploitation that God would employ in making Pharaoh an example for all who exalt themselves over Adonai.

In the third sign that God gives to Moses and Aaron to perform before Israel, God tells Moses and Aaron to take some water from the Nile, pour it on dry ground, and it will become blood. This sign is replicated and expanded to become the first plague that is carried out in response to Pharaoh's defiance.

When the sign is performed before Israel, we taught you that it would have been seen as God confirming that he has seen the bloodshed of Israel that has taken place in the waters and has not forgotten the loss that his people have experienced. When the plague is performed on the Egyptians, it is not some water from the Nile, but ALL of the water of the Nile turns into blood, and this time, the intended meaning was to show Egypt that he is the God of the people whom Egypt has murdered, and the time for judgment has arrived!

~

The second sign given to Israel was the hand that was taken from Moses' side, revealed to be leprous, and then placed back by the side of Moses. It is then taken out to be shown as whole and healed. We taught that the Israelites would have seen this sign as a sign of their works being restored, from doing the bidding of the Egyptians to eventually doing the will of God again.

As we shared last week, this sign was multiplied, affecting not only leprous hands, but boils on all the people of Egypt. Unlike the sign given to the Israelites, there is no recorded supernatural healing of the boils like there was for the leprous hand. This is precisely

because there will be no restoration for the Egyptians in the coming chapters unless they repent and join Israel in what God had already determined he would do for Israel!

We are not there now, but we will see in the coming weeks that many Egyptians will leave the land of Egypt and join the Israelites in having their work of their hands restored by coming near to the Father's side.

~

The next thing that we want to take a look at is where and when this plague is taking place.

Not only is the time like many of the most skilled conquerors throughout history, God is not only staging how this battle will take place, he is determining where this victory is going to start happening.

In warfare, the staging of the battle is just as important, if not more, than the actual battle itself. Many Generals, conquerors, and kings throughout history would manipulate their enemies through the use of terrain, weather, and supplies to bring them to certain locations, thereby ensuring that the battle would take place on their own terms.

Oftentimes, a General would select a place of great historical significance or even a battlefield where a previous loss for his nation took place, to overturn the past failure and cement his victory.

You should view God as doing the same thing when he tells Moses to go to the bank of the Nile, because this place had great historical significance for both Israel and Egypt, and it is the site of a previous loss for the people of Israel.

(READ SLIDE)

BANK OF THE NILE

Genesis 41:15–20 (NIVUK84)

15 Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I had a dream, and no-one can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it." 16 "I cannot do it," Joseph replied to Pharaoh, "but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires." 17 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "In my dream I was standing on the **bank of the Nile**, 18 when out of the river there came up seven cows, fat and sleek, and they grazed among the reeds. 19 After them, seven other cows came up—scrawny and very ugly and lean. I had never seen such ugly cows in all the land of Egypt. 20 The lean, ugly cows ate up the seven fat cows that came up first.

Exodus 2:3 (NIVUK84)

3 But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the **bank of the Nile**.

Exodus 7:15–17 (ESV)

15 Go to Pharaoh in the morning, as he is going out to the water. Stand on the **bank of the Nile** to meet him and take in your hand the staff that turned into a serpent. 16 And you shall say to him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you, saying, "Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness." But so far, you have not obeyed. 17 Thus says the LORD, "By this you shall know that I am the LORD: behold, with the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water that is in the Nile, and it shall turn into blood.

The term "the bank of the Nile" is mentioned exactly three times in the Bible, and in each of these occurrences, a different Pharaoh was in power.

The first featured a Pharaoh who would bless Israel and the bank of the Nile was the place that initiated the mutual blessing between Israel and Egypt.

The second featured a Pharaoh who hates the Israelites and is using the Nile to destroy them. On the same Nile, God preserved Moses as a baby, who was the designated deliverer of his people, and then used Pharaoh to raise him up.

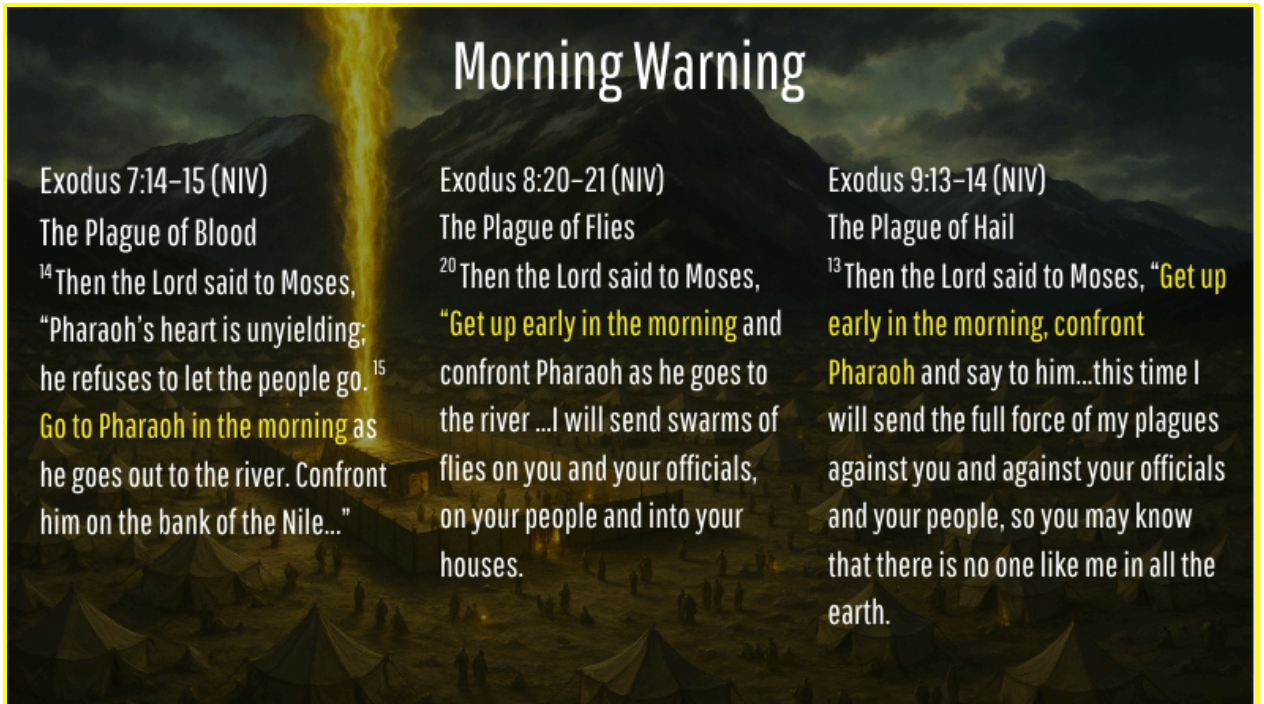
In the third, we have another Pharaoh who hates the Israelites, except now the tables have turned, and Moses, the deliverer, is fully mature. By the power of God, he is going to use the Nile to display God's total dominance over Egypt!

Interestingly enough, not only is the location significant, but so is the

time.

In the opening shots of the war, God instructs Moses to wake up early in the morning and meet Pharaoh on the bank of the Nile.

(DO NOT READ)



Morning Warning

<p>Exodus 7:14–15 (NIV) The Plague of Blood</p> <p>¹⁴Then the Lord said to Moses, “Pharaoh’s heart is unyielding; he refuses to let the people go. ¹⁵Go to Pharaoh in the morning as he goes out to the river. Confront him on the bank of the Nile...”</p>	<p>Exodus 8:20–21 (NIV) The Plague of Flies</p> <p>²⁰Then the Lord said to Moses, “Get up early in the morning and confront Pharaoh as he goes to the river ...I will send swarms of flies on you and your officials, on your people and into your houses.</p>	<p>Exodus 9:13–14 (NIV) The Plague of Hail</p> <p>¹³Then the Lord said to Moses, “Get up early in the morning, confront Pharaoh and say to him...this time I will send the full force of my plagues against you and against your officials and your people, so you may know that there is no one like me in all the earth.</p>
--	--	--

Adonai specifically says to go to Pharaoh in the morning, during the 1st, 4th and 7th plagues. Each instance, Moses goes to warn Pharaoh of the disaster that will come if he does not let the Hebrews go. These three "morning warnings" are intentionally upping the stakes for Pharaoh and signifying another round of plagues coming upon him.

(DO NOT READ)

PLAGUES: OVERVIEW

	PLAGUE	Time	Area of attack	Means of administration
1.	WATER TO BLOOD	morning	comfort	Aaron's staff
2.	FROGS	not specified	comfort	Aaron's staff
3.	GNATS	not specified	comfort	Aaron's staff
4.	FLIES	morning	possessions	Hand of God
5.	LIVESTOCK	not specified	possessions	Hand of God
6.	BOILS	not specified	possessions	Hand of God
7.	HAIL	morning	mortality	Moses' staff
8.	LOCUSTS	not specified	mortality	Moses' staff
9.	DARKNESS	not specified	mortality	Moses staff
10.	DEATH OF THE FIRST BORN	not specified		

As you can see on this slide, we combined our two plague pattern slides from earlier. You can see again that with each successive triad of plagues, each begins with a warning in the morning towards Pharaoh - completely aligning with the next area the plagues attack (comfort, possessions, mortality). Also, the next means the plagues will be administered through (Aaron's staff, Hand of God, and Moses' staff).

All in all, God is giving Pharaoh every indication that things will only increase in difficulty every time he refuses to obey.

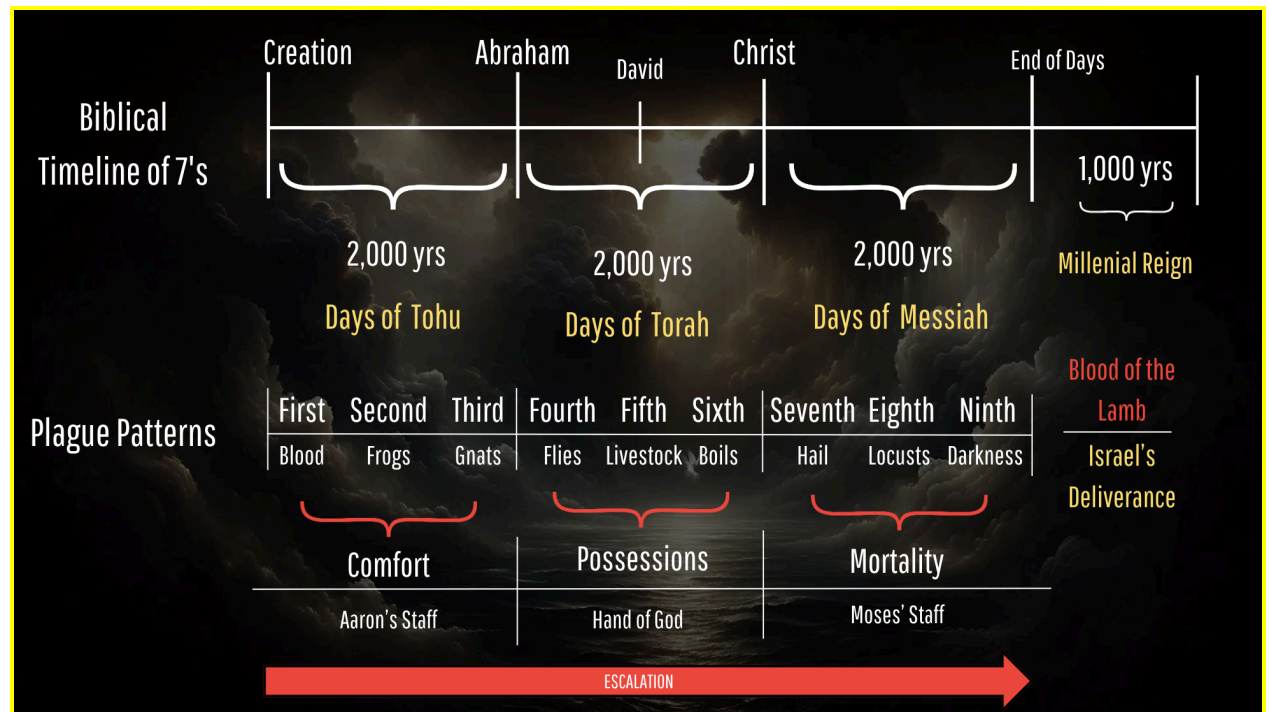
Knowing this, it makes every interaction that Moses has with Pharaoh in the morning feel ominous knowing the impending judgment, which it should. But it also should bring hope, knowing that there is still time for those who are in darkness.

- **John 9:4–5 (NIV)**

- 4 As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me.
Night is coming, when no one can work. 5 While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

It is morning now, there is still time, but night is coming, and there will be no time left for those whose hearts are hard. Before we move, we made a slide for you to consider when surveying our unique positioning in Adonai's plan of redemption

(DO NOT READ)



Being near the end of the age gives us a unique perspective to see how our God reveals his plans in stages.

The Jews have recognized this in their calendar: giving the history of the world three distinct "days" as we have shown you in Genesis. tohu, torah, messiah which precedes the millenial reign.

Days of Tohu: where sin reigned, their sin brought chaos and disorder and eventually judgment, the people rejected God, but there was hope on the horizon in God's chosen man Abraham.

Days of Torah: Ushered in by Abraham and continued by Moses, David and the prophets. But again, Adonai was rejected.

Days of Messiah: next is the final period before the final deliverance and salvation of Israel, where Adonai sent his Son who was also rejected, to preach a message of repentance in anticipation of what was to come.

We hope you can see the correspondence to our subject matter tonight. Just like the days of Tohu, Torah, and Messiah, the plagues were rolled out in three stages, with a progressive and escalating set of signs and warnings of what was to come.

We are nearing the end of these days (*or plagues*) and just as in the days of Moses, it will be undeniable to all that YHWH is God because of his mighty hand that he will stretch out over the nations once again.

Let's keep moving.

16 Then say to him, ‘The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has sent me to say to you: Let my people go, so that they may worship me in the desert. But until now you have not listened.

17 This is what the LORD says: By this you will know that I am the LORD: With the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water of the Nile, and it will be changed into blood.

18 The fish in the Nile will die, and the river will stink; the Egyptians will not be able to drink its water.’ ”

19 The 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 the wooden buckets and stone jars.”

As we walk through these verses, we see not just a wonder from Yahweh's hand, but the first blow in his war against the gods of Egypt. This is a holy war between Yahweh, the one true God and the gods of Egypt.

The first plague of turning the Nile into blood was not random. It was deliberate, strategic and devastating.

To truly grasp the impact of this plague, we need to understand the place the Nile had in Egyptian life. The Nile was flowing straight through the heart of Egyptian culture. It was their source of drinking water, their irrigation system, their fishing ground, and the center for trade and commerce. Their calendars revolved around its flooding. Their gods were said to dwell in or control its waters.

God was definitely sending a message. He was delivering a blow to the foundation of their society. Jamieson-Fausset-Brown says that the Egyptians abhorred blood in their culture, so they must have been horrified when they saw their sacred river and all other water in their country turned to blood.

Imagine the scene...The Nile runs red and the air fills with the smell of death. The fish float lifeless to the surface. Panic spreads. People can't drink. They scramble to find water, but even the water in their own homes is corrupted.

It's no wonder the land descended into chaos. And remember...this was just plague number one.

We can't lose sight of God's purpose that He makes clear in Exodus 12:12,

- **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.

As we have stated in our previous teachings, this was an all-out war on the gods of Egypt. The Bible does not go into identifying the specific Egyptian gods that God is judging (and neither will we), but Exodus 12 makes it very clear that this is exactly what Yahweh is doing.

The Nile, which was central to Egyptian life and worship, was the very place God chose to begin His judgments. With one act, He revealed that what they worshipped could not protect them... could not sustain them... could not even preserve its own sacred waters.

What's even more incredible is that this could not be a naturally occurring phenomenon or some easily explainable occurrence. Today, faithless theologians and apologists live to explain this away by attributing these events to some sort of red algae that bloomed suddenly. If that was the case, then how did it occur in containers?

As shocking as this is, take note that it will happen again, only on a much grander scale.

- **Revelation 16:3–7 (NIVUK84)**
- 3 The second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, **and it turned into blood like that of a dead man**, and **every living thing in the sea died**.
- 4 The third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. 5 Then I heard the angel in charge of the waters say:
 - “You are just in these judgments,
 you who are and who were, the Holy One,
 because you have so judged;

6 for they have shed the blood of your saints and prophets,
and you have given them blood to drink as they deserve.” 7 And I
heard the altar respond:

“Yes, Lord God Almighty,
true and just are your judgments.”

Notice how much more expanded these events are in the book of
Revelation. It is not only one river on earth turning into blood; it is the
entire sea and all of the rivers and springs!

Notice that the waters turning into blood is also a judgment and
recognition of wrongful blood that has been shed by the wicked!

**20 Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD had commanded. He
raised his staff in the presence of Pharaoh and his officials and
struck the water of the Nile, and all the water was changed into
blood.**

Besides the PaRDeS we showed you a few weeks ago concerning
the sign of blood, and the magnification of blood all the way to
Revelation we just discussed, there one more aspect we wanted to
show you before moving on.

It seems quite significant that the first plague be one concerning
blood and water. We told you in our overview that Moses is one of the
clearest Messianic Figures in the Older Testament. Moses and
Aaron's sign at the Nile not only signifies the life that Adonai would
bring from death, but also builds upon a prophetic picture. Thousands
of years later Jesus' initiation of Israel's ultimate deliverance was
attested to by both water and blood.

- **John 19:34 (NIV)**
- ³⁴ Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear,
bringing a sudden flow of blood and water.

The deliverance of Israel requires blood and water. Blood and water began the Hebrews Exodus from Egypt. Jesus death continued the larger prophetic story of Israel's ultimate deliverance still to come, and like our chapter tonight, was attested to a sign of water and blood.

- **1 John 5:6–8 (NIV)**

- ⁶ This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. ⁷ For there are three that testify: ⁸ the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.

Moses and Aaron are God's representatives that are coming to Egypt by blood and water, judgment and purification, vindication and salvation.

Moses would continue to testify with blood and water, listen to how the writer of Hebrews describes the declaration of the book of the Law by Moses to Israel.

- **Hebrews 9:19 (ESV)**

- ¹⁹ For when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people.

The progression deliverance of Israel is continually being testified to by blood and water:

- The Nile turning to blood
- The Law sprinkled with blood and water
- Jesus death with blood and water

- We won't spend much more time on the topic, but it was striking to us which sign Adonai chose to be the first.

21 The fish in the Nile died, and the river smelled so bad that the Egyptians could not drink its water. Blood was everywhere in Egypt.

22 But the Egyptian magicians did the same things by their secret arts, and Pharaoh's heart became hard; he would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the LORD had said.

Now, we know that you have been waiting for us to discuss secret arts in the Bible, so we will do our best to comment on them as we see fit biblically.

When we examine the Bible as a whole, we see that there is an entire spiritual world that exists, unseen by the human eye, and often not understood or contemplated.

For reference, take a look at:

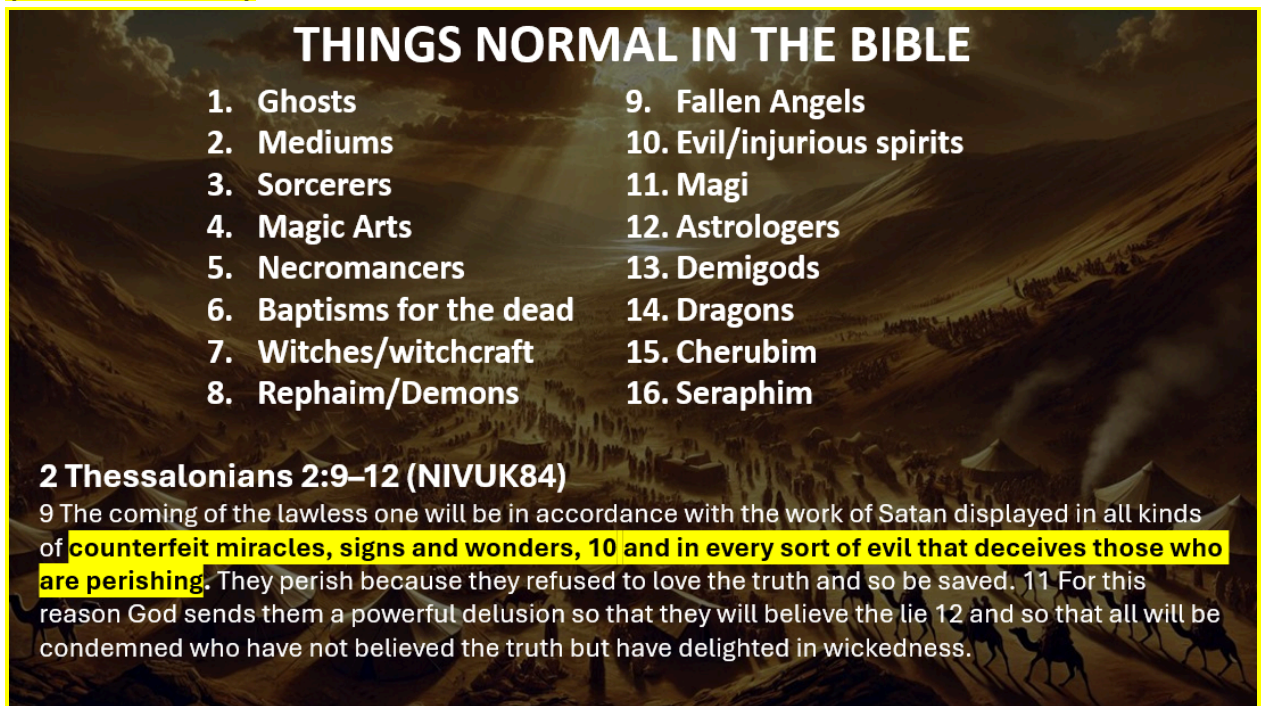
- **Jeremiah 25:6 (ESV)**
- 6 Do not go after other gods to serve and worship them, or provoke me to anger with the work of your hands. Then I will do you no harm.'

The Bible repeatedly and explicitly commands believers not to serve or worship other gods. This takes into account the fact that other gods **can** be served and that they may actually grant certain abilities or cause certain effects in their worshippers.

Furthermore, when you consider the Bible as a whole, you will see that there are men who are not in right relationship with Adonai and are serving foreign gods who seem to have supernatural abilities. Consider the man in Acts 19:6 who had an evil spirit that enabled him to overpower 7 Jewish men.

While all of this is true and many of us have experienced having to deal with men like this on the mission field, you need to know that the Bible mentions quite a few things that exist that the average Christian would relegate to the realm of fantasy. For example, take a look at this next slide:

(READ SLIDE)

The slide features a dark, atmospheric background image of a desert landscape with a large, ancient stone structure and a caravan of camels. The title 'THINGS NORMAL IN THE BIBLE' is centered at the top in a bold, white, sans-serif font. Below the title is a two-column list of 16 items, numbered 1 through 16, in a white, sans-serif font. At the bottom of the slide, the text '2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 (NIVUK84)' is displayed in a bold, white, sans-serif font, followed by a paragraph of text in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. The paragraph includes a highlighted section in yellow.

THINGS NORMAL IN THE BIBLE

1. Ghosts	9. Fallen Angels
2. Mediums	10. Evil/injurious spirits
3. Sorcerers	11. Magi
4. Magic Arts	12. Astrologers
5. Necromancers	13. Demigods
6. Baptisms for the dead	14. Dragons
7. Witches/witchcraft	15. Cherubim
8. Rephaim/Demons	16. Seraphim

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 (NIVUK84)
9 The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, 10 and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 11 For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie 12 and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.

When we are saying that these things are normal in the Bible, we do not mean that they are good.... We mean that the Bible makes frequent mention of them with no thought of them being abstract or uncommon.

Furthermore, when you are reading 2 Thessalonians 2 at the bottom of the slide, understand that Satan can grant abilities to perform counterfeit miracles! That does not mean that the miracles are not real; it means that they do not originate from God, and therefore, their aim is deception and not truth.

With that said, as a Christian, you should have no concern over the efficacy of these counterfeit spiritual beings. Although they are real, they can do nothing to stop the power of God and God has granted us authority to even trample on serpents!

The next thing that we want to mention is that Pharaoh's heart is becoming hard, just as God predicted.

- **2 Timothy 3:6–9 (ESV)**
- 6 For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, 7 always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. **8 Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses**, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith. 9 But they will not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men.

When Paul comments on those who are having their hearts hardened, he mentions this exact scene in the Book of Exodus, and he even mentions the names of the two magicians.

While we are not 100% certain how Paul knew their names, we can ascertain that there was more public knowledge of them in the 1st century that Paul is aware of.

For now, notice that Paul is drawing from the context of Exodus 7 by saying that these men and those who fellowship with them oppose the truth and are corrupted in mind.

This is great insight into what is happening with Pharaoh in this very moment. While God did say that He was going to harden Pharaoh's heart several chapters back, what we can see is that Pharaoh's heart was already hardened when we find him in Exodus 7.

He is now continuing to harden his heart when he finds relief in the

fact that the miracles can be slightly discredited by rationalizing that Janes and Jambres can replicate them.

What we need to understand is that Pharaoh is not actually hardening his heart based on reason alone; his heart was already predisposed to defy God the moment he said he did not know who YHWH was.

According to Psalm 14:1, which says, "The fool says in his heart that there is no God," Pharaoh is not making a decision in his mind; he has made a decision in his heart because his heart is in rebellion against God.

What becomes very informative about Pharaoh's heart-hardening process is that, throughout the story of Exodus, three Hebrew words are used to describe his heart hardening, even though they are all translated the same way in English as "harden".

These three words are:

Pharaoh's Heart Hardening Process

Qashah- "to harden"

Chazak - "To strengthen"

Kavod - "to become weighty"

These three words seem to be interchanging throughout the story to form a repeating cycle that Pharaoh goes through until his demise.

This cycle would look something like this: His heart becomes hard, then his heart is strengthened, and then his heart becomes weighty and then it goes back to hardening again. The sad truth about this process is that most of these phrases or words that are being used are used after Pharaoh finds relief, and half of them Pharaoh is doing to himself and the other half the Lord is doing.

This process probably looked something like:

- He hardened his heart because he did not like what he heard, due to being at odds with the Lord
- His heart was strengthened in resolve to continue in the path he had already determined against better judgment.
- And then his heart was so weighed down with his actions that he found it impossible to go back.

•

This is a Pharaoh problem for sure, but it is actually a problem for believers and non-believers alike.

Our passage tonight began with these words:

V.14 “The Lord said to Moses, “Pharaoh’s heart is unyielding; he refuses to let the people go.”

That brought us to **v.22**

22 But the Egyptian magicians did the same things by their secret arts, and Pharaoh’s heart became hard; he would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the Lord had said.

23 Instead, he turned and went into his palace, and did not take even this to heart.

The NLT says, “he put the whole thing out of his mind.” The NET says, “he didn’t pay any attention to this”.

Not long after the deliverance from Egypt, the Israelites would be receiving words from the Lord that warned them against the hardening of their hearts, and it was worded like this:

(READ COLORED PORTIONS)

Deut. 29 “Hardened Heart/Bitter Root” 1 of 2

18 Make sure there is no man or woman, clan or tribe among you today whose heart turns away from the Lord our God to go and worship the gods of those nations; make sure there is no root among you that produces such bitter poison.

19 When such a person hears the words of this oath, he invokes a blessing on himself and therefore thinks, “I will be safe, even though I persist in going my own way.” This will bring disaster on the watered land as well as the dry.

20 The Lord will never be willing to forgive him; his wrath and zeal will burn against that man. All the curses written in this book will fall upon him, and the Lord will blot out his name from under heaven.

21 The Lord will single him out from all the tribes of Israel for disaster, according to all the curses of the covenant written in this Book of the Law.

22 Your children who follow you in later generations and foreigners who come from distant lands will see the calamities that have fallen on the land and the diseases with which the Lord has afflicted it.

Can you not hear Pharaoh and the disaster that befell Egypt in these warnings? Look at the second part of this passage:

(READ COLORED PORTIONS)

Deut. 29 "Hardened Heart/Bitter Root" 2 of 2

23 The whole land will be a burning waste of salt and sulfur—**nothing planted, nothing sprouting, no vegetation growing on it.** It will be like the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which the Lord overthrew in fierce anger.

24 All the nations will ask: "Why has the Lord done this to this land? Why this fierce, burning anger?"

25 And the answer will be: "It is because this people abandoned the covenant of the Lord, the God of their fathers, the covenant he made with them when he brought them out of Egypt.

26 **They went off and worshiped other gods** and bowed down to them, gods they did not know, gods he had not given them.

27 Therefore the Lord's anger burned against this land, so that **he brought on it all the curses written in this book.**

28 In furious anger and in great wrath the Lord uprooted them from their land and thrust them into another land, as it is now."

Deut. 29:18-28 NIV 84

The Lord will escalate judgments on even His own people if they harden their hearts to His words and follow after other gods, just like He did with Pharaoh and Egypt.

As the end of days settles upon us, it is a certainty that the hardening of hearts will be great. It is as if the entire world will be full of Pharaohs. Listen to this:

○ **2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 NIV 84**

- **9** The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders,
10 and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.
11 For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie
12 and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.

As we have discussed already tonight, God will allow the hearts of

those who don't want to believe the truth to be more and more deceived, becoming harder and more wicked. Verse 10 says that this will happen to those who refuse to love the truth and so be saved. However, this will not just be a problem among those who are perishing, but also among those who identify as believers.

- **Matthew 24:10-13 (NIV 84)**

- 10 At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, 11 and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. 12 Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, 13 but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.

The hearts of most will grow hard, because of an increased distance from the Word of God. A callousness develops, unyielding hearts that do not pay attention to the Word, will not receive the seeds of the Word during the hardship. This is no different than what happened to Pharaoh...

(READ SLIDE)

Heart Hardening Process

- He hardened his heart because he did not like what he heard, due to being at odds with the Lord
- His heart was strengthened in resolve to continue in the path he had already determined against better judgment.
- And then his heart was so weighed down with his actions that he found it impossible to go back.

The Word of the Lord falls upon the righteous and the wicked alike, and there are parts of your heart that are soft and receive the Word, and maybe some parts that are more like Pharaoh than you would

like to admit. Consider the juxtaposition in this familiar passage:

(READ COLORED PORTIONS)

Hebrews 12 “Trained” or “Embittered”

7 **Endure hardship as discipline**; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? 8 If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. 9 Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. **How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live!** 10 Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. 11 No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. 12 Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. 13 "Make level paths for your feet, so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed. 14 Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. 15 **See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.**

Hebrews 12:7-15 NIV 84

Hardship comes upon **everyone**. God disciplines **everyone**. Why does the writer use the language of a harvest of righteousness and peace in verse 11? It is because seeds of the Word are being sewn upon the hearts of all men. The hardened heart will not receive the Word, will pay no attention to it, will not submit. Verse 15 makes it clear that these Words from God, this hardship, this discipline from Him is a grace, meant to train a man. But the one who misses the grace of God, also seems to produce something, not a harvest of peace and righteousness but a bitter root that grows up and causes trouble defiling many...or as Deuteronomy 29 put it, poisoning the land.

23 Instead, he turned and went into his palace, and did not take even this to heart.

24 And all the Egyptians dug along the Nile to get drinking water, because they could not drink the water of the river.

25 Seven days passed after the LORD struck the Nile.

The chapter ends with a stark contrast. Pharaoh is hardening his

heart to the truth of Adonai's supreme power over him and his gods. He turns and walks back into his palace, leaving his people to figure out the plague his hardness of heart has brought upon the land. All the while his people desperately begin to dig along the Nile in search of water.

The discipline of the Lord will either cause you to walk away back into the comfort of your own sin, with a complete unwillingness to change, or it will cause you to start digging, desperate to find water.

The bitter root that grows from a hard heart will grow if you walk away and return home. But, if you begin to dig, you can uproot the bitterness and sin and find water from the Word of God, your thirst will be quenched and your heart made pure.

At the beginning of our study in Exodus, the Israelites were actually in a similar position that we find Pharaoh in today. They both were confronted with a "hardness" of sorts. You can thank Asa and Austin for this next find.

(DO NOT READ)

Hard/Harden qashah/aqasheh

קשה

Exodus 1:13–14 (ESV)

13 So they ruthlessly made the people of Israel work as slaves 14 and made their lives bitter with **hard** service, in mortar and brick, and in all kinds of work in the field. In all their work they ruthlessly made them work as slaves.

Exodus 7:2–3 (ESV)

2 You shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall tell Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go out of his land. 3 But I will **harden** Pharaoh's heart, and though I multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt,

their	lives	bitter	with	hard	service,
הֵם	חַיֵּיהֶם	יְמֹרְרוּ	בְּ	קָשָׁה	עֲבֹדָה
hem	chayyei	yemorru	ba	qashah	avodah
הֵם	חַיֵּי	מֵרַר	בְּ	קָשָׁה	עֲבֹדָה
hem	chai	mrr	b	qasheh	avodah
RS3MP	NCMP	VbW3MP	P	JFSA	NCFS
H1992	H2416	H4843		H7186	H5656
life (course of)		to make bitter		hard (exhausting)	work

But I	will	harden	Pharaoh's heart,
אֲנִי	אֶקְשֶׁה	אֶת־	לֵב־
wa	ani	aqsheh	eth
אֲנִי	קָשָׁה	אֶת	לֵב
w	ani	qshh	eth
C	RP1-S	Vcl1-S	PO
H589	H7185	H853	H6547
	to harden (make stubborn)		heart (int)

On this slide we wanted to show you that the same word for "hard" service in Exodus 1, that describes the labor inflicted on the Hebrews, has the same root *qashah* as the word used in chapter 7 verse 3 describing Pharaoh's heart.

The difficulty Pharaoh has inflicted on the Hebrews is coming back to curse him and his entire nation.

- **Obadiah 15 (NIV)**
- 15 "The day of the Lord is near for all nations. As you have done, it will be done to you; your deeds will return upon your own head.

The hardness of the labor did not cause the Hebrews to recoil, give up and distance themselves from Adonai. Instead, it only toughened them, caused them to be delivered and trained them into the warriors they would become in the desert. In contrast, it is the hardness in

Pharaoh that brings about perpetual hardship and his eventual destruction.

This is how discipline and difficulty works in your life. It can either bring about more suffering, or it can strengthen you and bring about your deliverance. The first step is to grab your Bible, and begin to dig.

Sadly, the digging of the Egyptians will not lead them to water. Only those whose shovel is the Word of God and their heart is the soil will find water, and only those who put their trust in Adonai will thirst no more.

This reminds us of one final passage of hope for us in the room tonight, it's from our study in Genesis.

- **Genesis 26:32 (ESV)**

32 That same day Isaac's servants came and told him about the well that they had dug and said to him, "We have found water."

When you are a servant of the Promised Son, your digging will not be in vain. He will show you the well to the water of life, and it's found in the Word of God, when you dig with a humble heart.

Blessed be the God of Israel. Blessed be the Promised Son who brings us up out of our own hardness of heart and gives us a victorious shout to proclaim to the nations: "We have found water"!