

## I. What was the Plague on the Firstborn

### A. The Announcement

- To Moses... Exodus 4:21-23; 11:1
- To Pharaoh... Exodus 11:4-8

### B. The Passover...Exodus 12:1-28, 43-51

### C. The Plague...Exodus 12:29,30

## II. Why the Plague on the Firstborn

### A. To finally implement the deliverance...Exodus12:31-42

### B. To establish the preeminence of both Yahweh and Israel...Exodus 13:1-5; 11-16

### C. To pave the way for the ultimate Firstborn Son

- Matthew 26:17-30
- Mark 12:12-26
- Luke 22:7-38
- 1 Corinthians 5:7
- Colossians 1:15-18
- Hebrews 1:5-7
- Romans 8:29
- Revelation 1:5
- Hebrews 11:23



# My Firstborn Son

Exodus 4:21-23; 11:1-13:16

Message Four in the Series: Knowing God Through Exodus

## Review

Last week Pastor Rainer took us through the first nine plagues delivered by God to the Egyptians. He showed us how each of **these plagues were designed to...**

**1. ...grab Pharaoh's attention** (and by implication Egypt's and Israel's)

The miraculous intervention of Yahweh through the plagues was a demonstration of the truth contained in his name. In chapter three, when Moses asked, "(What if the people ask) *What is his name,*" God answered "*I Am who I Am.*" This declaration of I Am who I Am and the personal name of God, (YHWH) Yahweh, are very similar. So, in the declaration of his name God demonstrates his very existence and nature. Now, in the plagues, Pharaoh will actually see the answer to his question, "*Who is Yahweh, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know Yahweh and I will not let Israel go*" (5:2). The very purpose behind the Book of Exodus—"*teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you*" (Ex. 33:13)—was about to heat up.

**2. ..prove the truth behind what Yahweh will later give as his first and second commandments:** "*I am Yahweh your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or in the waters below*" (Exodus 20:2-4). The plague on the Nile exposed the Egyptian gods Hapi and Osiris as nothing more than man made idols. The plague of frogs exposed Heqt. The plague of

gnats or lice exposed Kheper. The plagues continued, four, five, six, seven, eight, each one exposing yet another man made idol, right on down to the ninth plague. The ninth plague exposed Egypt's greatest god, RA, the Sun God...the giver of light. Could even Egypt's greatest god, Ra, prevent Yahweh from bringing on the darkness? Of course not. For Pharaoh, for Egypt, and for Israel the false gods had been exposed for what they were...the vain imagination of those who had lost touch with the one true God. The result? Pharaoh's heart was hardened. Moses and the people of Israel began the slow journey of finally depending on "Yahweh, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob."

Plague	Response	God Attacked
Water into Blood	Pharaoh's heart was hardened.	Hapi (the God of the Nile); Osiris (Nile was his bloodstream)
Frogs	Pharaoh's heart was hardened.	Heqt (many frogs were usually considered a good thing)
Lice or Gnats	Pharaoh's heart was hardened. He would not even speak to Moses.	Kheper (God of bugs)
Flies	Pharaoh's heart was hardened.	Kheper
Murrain: livestock disease	Pharaoh's heart was hardened.	Apis (Sacred Bull)
Boils	Pharaoh's heart was hardened.	Imhotep (physician God) & Thoth (Magic and healing)
Hail	Pharaoh admits to sin, but then continues in sin by hardening his heart.	Nut (Sky Goddess)
Locusts	Pharaoh acts in haste and compromises. The Lord hardens his heart.	Seth (God of Crops)
Dark	Pharaoh's heart hardened by God. Tells Moses to <i>get out of my sight</i> .	Ra (Sun God)
Firstborn	Israelites let go	Pharaoh

We now come to 11:1 — 13:16, the Plague of the Firstborn. This plague is distinctly different from the first nine. While the first nine verified the truth of Yahweh's claims about himself, "Hear, O Israel: Yahweh our God, Yahweh is one" (Deuteronomy 6:4). The tenth plague verified the claim of Yahweh regarding Israel. When Moses finally consented to return to Egypt and obey God, he heard these words from Yahweh (Exodus 4:21-23):

*Yahweh said to Moses, "When you return to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders I have given you the power to do. But I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go. Then say to Pharaoh, 'This is what the LORD says: Israel is my firstborn son, and I told you, "Let my son go, so he may worship me." But you refused to let him go; so I will kill your firstborn son.*

The deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage, precipitated finally through the plague against the firstborn sons, was a living fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant given to the progenitor of the Nation of Israel, Abraham himself:

*Yahweh had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."*

Unlike the first nine plagues, the tenth plague demonstrated, first, that Pharaoh, just like his false gods, was a false and powerless despot, and second, God's promise and purpose to and for his firstborn nation would always remain true. So, let's see what this firstborn thing is all about...