

PHARAOH CHALLENGES THE WORD OF GOD

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Life everlasting for Egypt's pharaohs (god-kings) was the sustaining principle of Egyptian civilisation. In an ancient religious text, a deceased king asks of the creator-god, "O Atum, what is my duration of life?" And the deity replies, "Though art destined for millions and millions of years, a lifetime of millions."

To supply their necessities for a lifetime of millions, the kings designed tombs and mortuary temples that would last forever. A common understanding for tomb in fact meant "house of eternity." The people of Egypt willingly laboured to build these monuments for their dead rulers, believing that, as gods, the pharaoh had to be properly provided for and favoured.

Many vast sepulchers and massive shrines survive to this day, some thousands of years after the culture that created them weakened and perished. The tombs have kept alive the names of ancient kings (i.e. Ramses II, who was believed to be reigning during the plagues), in a way, fulfilling the Egyptian belief that "To speak the name of the dead is to make him live again." The reign of the Pharaohs served as a contradiction and a challenge to the word of God. Keep in mind that the Egyptians were the descendants of Ham while the people of Israel (Jacob's name was changed to Israel Gen 32:28) were the descendants of Shem... the Anglo-Saxon race. Less than 100 years before Moses, Jacob was ruling Egypt and the nation prospered mightily. When the pharaoh died the next generation forgot all about Jacob and his God and they reverted back to their own gods. They became jealous and fearful of the Israelites and had all the male babies murdered and that is where Moses begins his Egyptian connection. His mother made an ark out of bulrushes and hid him among the reeds on the river bank where the daughter of pharaoh discovered him (Exo 2:5). Moses mother was chosen and paid by pharaoh's daughter to bring up her own son.

God calls Moses to reveal His power to Pharaoh, in order to set the people free to serve God. EXO 7:1 And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet. Moses was to challenge the authority and test the power of pharaoh. **2** Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land. **3** And I will harden Pharaoh's heart (through pride), and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt. **4** But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies, [and] my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. **5** And the Egyptians shall know that I [am] the LORD, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them. *God wanted to reveal the foolishness of their false doctrines and free His people to serve Him effectively. (Pharaoh and the nature of the world have a lot in common and a parallel can be drawn between the false gods of Egypt and the false gods... ideas, of our time).*

Moses and Aaron go before pharaoh. 8 And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, **9** When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Shew a miracle for you (prove yourselves): then thou shalt say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and cast [it] before Pharaoh, [and] it shall become a serpent. **10** And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the LORD had commanded: and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. *The pharaohs used to wear the 'uraeus', a representation of the sacred snake on the front of their headdress as a sign of protection by the serpent goddess Wadjet.* **11** Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. **12** For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. *Their god of protection and their power was defeated and swiftly consumed.* **13** And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said. *Pharaohs rule and deity was challenged and overcome... his pride dominated him, (a very similar reaction to the power of the Holy Spirit by today's unbelieving generation).*

There were two battles going on at the same time. God's people were fighting for their survival, while the Egyptians were also fighting for their own survival. Two separate battles that overlapped and multiply affected both sides at the same time. Some had close and loved friends amongst the Egyptians, leading to confusions about loyalty etc. God allowed the Israelites to invite the believing Egyptians into their homes for safety against the plagues. This is similar to the church. The power of the Holy Spirit has freed us from one battle, but has placed us in the battle against unbelief and worldliness. The opponents of God will lose this battle.

The first plague. *(The period of time between the ten plagues was probably varied and could have been anywhere from days to perhaps months apart).* **20** And Moses and Aaron did so, as the LORD commanded; and he lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that [were] in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants; and all the waters that [were] in the river were turned to **blood**. *May have been an outbreak of red algae or similar or may be literal.* **21** And the fish that [was] in the river died; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river; and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.

The river was sacred and provided the great wealth of Egypt... water for all the herds and agriculture, silt for the crops, fish, mud for bricks and most importantly, it provided the papyrus by which they made their paper (they were very proud of their intellectual achievements and records) and they also made ropes, baskets, cords, etc. Pharaoh hardened his heart and the magicians called upon 'Hapi', one of their powerful gods with no results. They had gods for all occasions and needs and it can be safely assumed that they would have called upon their specific gods as the plagues arose (Exo12:12). See Egyptian history books for further details about their gods.

Second plague. FROGS, **EXO 8:6**, 'hecket'... pharaoh begs relief (8:8) ...hardens (8:15)

Third plague. LICE, **EXO 8:17**, the magicians call upon 'hathor' & 'nut' ...the magicians identify the plague as the finger of God, but pharaoh hardens (8:19)

Forth plague. FLIES, **EXO 8:24**, the magicians call upon 'shu' & 'isis' ...pharaoh bargains (8:28) and hardens (8:32)

Fifth plague. CATTLE DISEASED, (*All forms of cattle were not only food... they were transport and powered all the major implements*) **EXO 9:6**, the magicians call upon 'apis'... pharaoh hardens (9:7)

Sixth plague. BOILS, **EXO 9:10**, the magicians call upon 'sekhmet'... pharaoh hardens (9:12) pharaoh exalts himself against God's people (9:17)

Seventh plague. HAIL, **EXO 9:23**, God gave the Egyptians the opportunity to save their servants and their livestock... many still dwelt in unbelief (9:19-20), the magicians call upon 'Geb'... pharaoh begs relief (9:27) promises freedom (9:28) Hardens again (9:35)

Eighth plague. LOCUSTS, **EXO 10:13**, the magicians call upon 'Serapis'... pharaoh bargains (10:11) pharaoh begs relief (10:17) hardens again (10:20) All the crops that grew after the hail were destroyed (10:5)

Ninth plague. DARKNESS, **EXO 10:22**, the magicians call upon 'ra'... pharaoh bargains (10:24) and hardens (10:27) pharaoh rejects Moses for the last time with a threat of death if he returned.

Tenth plague. DEATH OF THE FIRSTBORN, **EXO 12:29**, *they have no god for death as pharaoh is supposed to live forever and have the power over life and death...* pharaoh and the Egyptians beg Israel to leave Egypt (12:31-33). The first Passover is instituted (12:1-28). The Egyptians give the Israelites much of their wealth (12:35-36).

God defeated all the gods of the Egyptians. **EXO 12:12** For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I [am] the LORD. *By the time the last plague came upon the Egyptians it was painfully clear to them that their philosophy about life, their gods and their religion was totally in vain... their 'king' was powerless.*

None of the plagues came upon the children of Israel. *Some examples* (8:22-23) (9:4) (9:26) (10:23)

The gods of this world are also being defeated one by one. Socialism, humanism, freedom of speech, human rights, one world government, communism, mysticism, feminism, technology, knowledge, philosophy, etc. etc. are all being shown to be totally powerless in providing a balanced and ideal world suitable for the whole creation. As one idea or philosophy fails, it is replaced by another, which also is shown to fail in the fullness of time. The bible tells us that mankind is going to stumble from one disaster to the next; never calling upon the God of the bible for his deliverance. Things really are no different than they were in time of pharaoh. Most people trust in their own opinions the same way that the Egyptians trusted in their gods, and failed. The Holy Spirit sets people free of the falseness and lies of this world and heals or delivers them of all their ills.

Do what Moses and Aaron did and reveal the power of God to those who are overcome by the problems of this world.

Your body is the temple of God now that you have received the Holy Spirit. Don't allow any of the worldly gods to take the place of the Holy Ghost in your life or your thinking. Consider the commitment of Moses and the results that flowed from it.