

"God's Love Story Sermon Outlines"

by Doug Hamilton

Section 4: He has a Jealous Love (Exodus Chapters 1-13)

The people of Israel had been in Egypt for over four centuries. During that time they multiplied from seventy people to millions, filling the Land of Goshen. Moses was called upon to speak for God to deliver the people and return them to the Promised Land wherewith they had come. They had become slaves against their will to build pyramids in a foreign land. God demanded Pharaoh through Moses "Let my people go!" (Exod 5:1).

It was not just out of the land they were to go, but also to come out from the false-gods to which they had accepted. They were desensitized to paganism, needing to be freed and reeducated to serve the one true God, Jehovah. It would be necessary to deprogram the Israelites from this idolatrous mindset; therefore Jehovah would launch an all-out war against Egypt's top gods to prove His superiority. Everyone in the Land of Egypt would be taught the lesson that our God is a jealous God and His love is a jealous love. He would destroy their pagan god system.

- Exodus 12:12 "...against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments-- I am the LORD."
- Num 33:4 "...The LORD had also executed judgments on their gods."
- Exodus 20:3-5 "You shall have no other gods before Me...You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God..."

He is a Jealous God!

What we are about to cover is God's best attempt to have "No Other gods Before Him". He is a jealous God and does not want to be shared with anyone or anything! He was determined to break the Israelites from the pagan gods of Egypt.

1) Nile to Blood

- In Exodus 7:20 The first plague was carried out, turning the Nile River into blood. When the staff of Moses struck the Nile River, the waters were turned to blood for seven days. Since the Nile was the primary source of drinking water for the Egyptians, they were forced to dig holes in the ground to find an emergency source of drinking water.
- The Egyptians firmly believed that the Nile was the life-blood of Egypt. They worshipped the Hapi, the Nile god. This Nile River was second only to Pharaoh in the eyes of the Egyptians, for they were absolutely dependent on it. They believed Hapi provided water, food and the yearly inundation of the river. The Egyptians actually had a "Hymn of the Nile" which has the phrase, "Thou art the Lord of the poor and the needy. If thou wert overthrown in the heavens the gods would fall upon their faces and men would perish." It was to this god that the Egyptians were sacrificing the Israelite babies to from Exodus 1:22.
- Old dependable Hapi turned on them on that day. He went from being a blessing to a curse. They could cry out for Hapi to deliver them in their thirst and hunger, but he was



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worthless to deliver them in their hour of need. God was saying, "You will not put Hapi before Me!" God has a jealous love and does not want to share it false gods.

2) Frogs

- The Egyptians worshipped a frog-headed goddess named Heqt. They believed she was a goddess possessing life-giving power. She was believed to oversee the midwives who helped women bring forth their babies, blowing a breath of life into the newborn's nostrils. Many times the women would wear necklaces with her image in order to win her favor and allow their newborns to live. They placed worship of the frog on such a high level that it was a capital offense to kill one.
- It states in Exodus 8:5-6 that with a wave of the staff, there were frogs everywhere! These little critters were in the houses, on their beds, in their kitchens and their cookware. No matter where they stepped, there were frogs. There were so many frogs that they were bringing destruction to the land (Psalm 78:45).
- Pharaoh begged for the frogs to be taken away. When Moses cried out to God, the frogs retreated to the Nile or died on the spot. There were rotting piles of them lay on the street and the stench would have been great. By the time the frog-plague was over, they did not want to see another one again. Instead of breathing life into newborns, she was reduced down to a rotten stench in the nostrils of the all the people of the land. Heqt is not the one that gives us life, but Jehovah! He is the Jealous God with a jealous love!



3) Lice

- Exodus 8:16-17 states with a wave of the staff, the third plague of lice was brought on. The Greek version of the Old Testament (known as the Septuagint) uses the word for louse so they evidently were lice. The word for gnat in the verse is *kinnom*, referring to an insect that attached itself to or under the skin, hence lice.
- It is important to understand the devastation this would have brought on the Egyptians for they were "lice-phobic". They were required to shave their entire body everyday and wear a single tunic to prevent lice on the body. Now these lice were all over their animals and themselves.
- Notice these lice came from the ground. This is because the Egyptians worshipped Geb: the earth god. When "*All the dust of the earth became gnats through all the land of Egypt*", this was their great god's way of turning on them. They used to cry out to Geb in their hours of need, but now he was crying out to them. When the Egyptian magicians tried to bring forth the same, they failed miserably, saying in Exod 8:19 "This is the finger of Jehovah." He is a jealous God and demands to be the center of our attention!

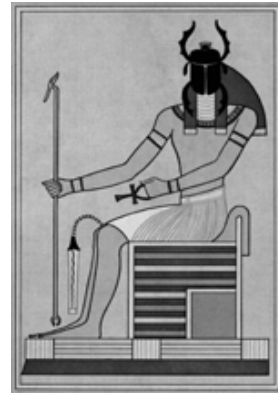


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4) Insects

- In Exodus 8:24 Pharaoh still refused to let the Israelites leave Egypt. God had Moses meet once again with Pharaoh early in the morning and announce the plague of swarming insects in the land of Egypt, except where the Israelites lived. This was done to demonstrate to Pharaoh that they were God's people (Exodus 8:20-32). The word for swarms can mean "all kinds of" or "mixture". In Psalm 78:45, we are told that "divers sorts" came upon them.
- The Egyptians worshipped Khepera, the god of resurrection. He was a major god which the Egyptians worshipped, being represented as a beetle-headed human or the scarab beetle itself. The scarab beetle tends to lay its eggs in carcasses. When the ancients witnessed a newly hatched scarabs coming out of the dead body, they tended to believe they brought about the afterlife. He was worshipped as the god of the resurrection. In fact the Egyptians believed that flies were involved in the process of getting to heaven. By the time this plague had taken its toll, the Egyptians did not want to see another scarab beetle in their lifetime, for they were "swarmed" with them. No longer would that generation look to Khepera for worship, for Jehovah was a jealous God with a jealous love for the people.



5) Pestilence on Cattle

- In Exod 9:2-6, Pharaoh continued to be stiff-necked unto the commands of Moses; therefore it was time for the fifth plague of pestilence for the cattle, affecting only the cattle of the Egyptians. This would have been devastating since the Egyptians were heavily dependent on the use of their livestock from milking, consumption and clothing. To have all of their supply wiped out in one day would have put many in danger.
- That brings us to the Apis bull, the living incarnation of Ptah. The Egyptians constantly watched the daily habits of the Apis bull, thinking it to be prophetic in nature. The bull would roam around throughout the temple grounds and bring great blessing to all who came into contact with it, including a supposed ability to heal with its breath. He was given special food, bathed and brushed daily, and even wore special clothes.
- When an Apis bull died, he was mummified and buried with honor just like a Pharaoh. There is a tomb in Egypt with nothing but the burial chambers of these Apis bulls and when one died, the priests would search the entire land to find a calf of replacement which met the requirements.
- They worshipped this beast with all their heart and so did the Israelites. It is believed that it was reversion to the old god system of Egypt that led the Israelites to make the Golden Calf of rebellion in Exodus 32:7-10. *"This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!"* This was definitely a major god to the Egyptians.



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- To have a plague take out the cattle of the Egyptians for a food supply and the Apis Bull as a spiritual supply would have been a blow to the false faith of the Egyptian god system.

6) Boils

- Exodus 9:8-10 says that Pharaoh would still not let the people of Israel depart from Egypt, hence the plague of boils. Moses and Aaron grabbed some ashes from the kiln and launched it into the air. It spread a fine dust throughout the whole land of Egypt. The result was a severe case of boils for the people and the remaining animals of the land. The priests hurt so bad they could not even stand before Moses.
- The Egyptians worshipped a god named Thoth: the god of science and health. A man with the head of an Ibis and wearing a lunar disk or crescent on his head. The sacrifice to this god was given the name Typhos and ashes from it were taken by the priests and thrown into the air. The Egyptians believed that if any of this ash fell on the skin of a living Egyptian, the person was safe from any defilement (anything that would cause the person to be physically ill and therefore spiritually unclean).
- Moses and Aaron did not take the ashes from the furnace of Typhon, but from the one that the Israelites used to make the mud bricks with. God was showing the Egyptians, particularly Pharaoh, that Typhon was powerless. He was showing them that simple ashes from the slave furnaces could be made to have more power by the One True God than ashes from their 'holy' furnaces. Even the priests would have been rendered unclean to carry out the sacrifices from the illness of the boils. He was a jealous God!



7) Hail

- In Exodus 9:23-26 Pharaoh still continued to deny that God was the One True God, not allowing the Israelites to leave Egypt. God then told Moses and Aaron to meet Pharaoh again. This time they were to tell him that God would bring hail upon all the land of Egypt except for where the Israelites lived. God also said that the next plagues would strike at the heart of Pharaoh and would truly persuade him that there is only One True God. The LORD wanted Pharaoh to know that he only ruled and lived because God allowed him to do so. He could easily take Pharaoh's life if he wanted to do so (Exodus 9:13-35).
- The Egyptians worshipped Nut: the sky goddess. She was sometimes represented as a woman without clothes, stretched across the skies. Her fingers touched one horizon and her toes touched the other. She was considered the mother of all gods by the Egyptians.
- It is likely that the Egyptians were calling out for her help prior to this plague, but it would change quickly. As the hail fell from the sky, Nut was not looking so great anymore, for they were running for their very lives. They had learned that God was a jealous God with a jealous love!

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8) Locusts

- In Exodus 10:4-6 Moses and Aaron again go to Pharaoh to tell him to let the Israelites depart. They warn him that if he does not let them go that God will bring locusts into Egypt. This will be the worst locust invasion since Egypt had come into existence and Pharaoh's servants beg him to allow the Israelites to leave, but he still refuses. Moses stretched out his hand with the rod and a strong east wind begins to blow for nearly a full day and night. The next morning the locusts arrive in devastating fashion.
- It has been shown that locusts can travel up to 15 miles per hour with a strong wind. These flying menaces must have come from a long distance for it to have taken 24 hours to travel to Egypt. This demonstrated to the Egyptians that God was over the world, not just over Egypt. These locusts ate everything that survived the devastation the hail, every green plant, all the fruit off of the plants, the remaining leaves and even the bark of the trees. There were so many locusts that the ground could not be seen, except where the Israelites were in Goshen.
- The Egyptians worshipped a god called Neper (also spelt Neptra or Nepri). This god was an androgynous deification of grain, a valuable commodity in ancient Egypt. They felt without proper worship and reverence for this god there could be great starvation. He was often referred to as the "god of Corn". He is associated with the other most used types of grain, including barley and wheat. His name simply meant "lord of the mouth", because he was the one that brought the grain out of the ground and into their mouths. Naturally following the downfall of Nut the sky goddess, the farmers would have been seriously reaching out this god, but Jehovah crushed any hope of this succeeding.



9) Darkness

- In Exodus 10:22-23 God told Moses to stretch his hand toward heaven and this would bring a great darkness on the land of Egypt. The darkness would be so severe that it could even be felt. The word "felt" means "to grope." The sun was completely blacked out.
- One of the most powerful and respected gods in Egypt was Ra: the sun god, usually ranking in their top three. In artwork Ra was depicted as a man having a wadjet sun disk above his head. Sometimes he had the head of a hawk, symbolizing that he was master over the sky. The Egyptians believed that Ra made the journey across the sky each day. In later myths about Ra, the sun is portrayed differently according to the position of the sun in the sky. They actually taught the sun was the eye of Ra, watching over all that they do. Imagine the terror in the Egyptian's heart when the sun went dark. They learned that Ra was not a powerful God, but a jealous God and a jealous love.



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10) Death of firstborn

- Summarizing Exodus 11:4-6, God had been more than patient with Pharaoh. He had given him nine chances to change his mind, but yet Pharaoh refused. God told Moses how to prepare for the next plague, for after the tenth, Pharaoh would not only ask them to leave, but would throw them out of Egypt completely.
- At midnight all of the firstborn in Egypt, who were not protected, would die. The only way to have the plague pass over a household would be through participation in the Passover feast with the blood of the lamb smeared on the doorpost of the home. There would be death for all first-born, from the poorest to the elite, including the royal household. Pharaoh's firstborn son would have to die (Exodus 11:1-12:36). All the homes of Egypt had great sorrow demonstrated from the cries which could be heard throughout the land.
- The Egyptians number one God was Pharaoh. By killing off Pharaoh's firstborn son, Jehovah proved that He was more powerful than any Egyptian god, including Pharaoh himself. Prior to this, Pharaoh's slaves had already begun to believe that Moses represented a more powerful God. In the end they were begging Pharaoh to let the Israelites depart.

Conclusion

After passing through the sea and witnessing the destruction of the Egyptian army, they sang a victory song. Within was the line Exodus 15:11 *"Who is like Thee among the gods, O LORD? Who is like Thee, majestic in holiness, awesome in praises, working wonders?"* The Israelites had for the moment understood that Jehovah was a jealous God with a jealous love for undivided devotion to Him.

This lesson is also for us. Within the context of God's Love Story, we must understand that His love for us is undivided and that our love for Him must also be undivided. He does not want us trusting in our modern gods of money, fame, fortune, fitness, entertainment, political savvy or political correctness, but in Him only. We must strive to have a jealous love for Him, loving Him with all our heart, soul and mind (Mt 22:37). Only then can we truly understand God's Love Story. In the next lesson we shall "Behold the Pattern".