

# God calls Moses to Go to Pharaoh Again!

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# E's Signs Relate to Later Stories

- Two of the signs God gives Moses, according to E, are
  - His hand can become leprous and then be restored
  - His staff becomes a snake, then a staff again
- Later, two consecutive E stories (when the J and P texts are removed to reproduce the origin E) are:
  - Miriam becomes leprous as snow when she and Aaron are critical of Moses (Numbers 12)
    - Being leprous was considered evil, suffering God's disapproval
  - God releases fiery snakes upon the people, killing many of them, and Moses makes a bronze snake on a pole that saves them when they gaze upon it (Numbers 21:5-9)

# Sequence of Three Stories

- Exodus 3-4 (merged JE version)
  - Moses meets God and receives an order to go to Pharaoh and tell him to let the people go
- Exodus 5 (merged JE version)
  - Moses and Aaron meet Pharaoh, but fail to free the people and they return to God
- Exodus 6:2-11, 30 (P)
  - P has God reveal his name (like E)
  - P's story of God commanding them to go to Pharaoh!
  - But they have already gone to speak to Pharaoh!

# Interleaving of Three Stories

- P's story of God commanding them to go to Pharaoh is in Exodus 6:2-11
  - It comes *after* they have already met Pharaoh!
  - P's story of Moses's *first* encounter with God (his "burning bush" story but with no bush) was inserted by the Redactor into JE's story of Moses's *second* encounter with God
  - Notice how God "repeats" what He said before about hearing the cry of the people and wanting to rescue them!
    - But it is not a repeat – it is P's version of the story inserted in a later place!

# “P Plus J” or “P Plus E”?

- The story of the plague consists of P’s version plus one other
  - Is this other version J’s or E’s?
  - Friedman believes it is E’s, though in earlier times, other scholar’s tended to think J’s; he admits it is hard to tell
  - J and P dominate Genesis (E has little to no text), but E has more in Exodus than J making the overall saga nearly equal
  - J favors the Patriarchs of Genesis, while E favors Moses
  - Friedman has no J text for almost 9 chapters - Ex. 5:2 to Ex. 13:31, during which the plagues occur
  - It is possible that J simply wrote no stories about the plagues, but it is also possible that J did and that the first redactor, who did discard some E text, chose to balance the texts by using the E stories of the plagues and discarding the J text about the plagues; we will never know
    - The second redactor kept all text (sacred), but the first did not

# “Differences Between E and P”

- The E story of the plagues is much longer than P’s version
  - After the introduction, P moves briskly from plague to plague, with little dialog between Moses and Pharaoh, but E has considerable negotiating between Pharaoh and Moses
  - P has “serpent”, whereas E has “snake” (the rod sign)
  - E has staff used by Moses, but P says Aaron used it
  - P has story of Pharaoh’s magicians mimicking the signs done to show God’s power; E has nothing about them
  - E has Moses demanding more in his negotiations while P shows Pharaoh’s magicians gradually doing less and less of the signs of God’s power demonstrated by Aaron

# “Demands Increase, Resistance Weakens”?

- The E story of the plagues shows Pharaoh’s resistance gradually diminishing as Moses gradually demands more and more
  - Moses initially demands a 3 day journey into the wilderness to worship, but does not mention leaving permanently! Pharaoh agrees, but limits to Egypt
  - Moses says their activities would offend native Egyptians; Pharaoh says don’t go far
  - Pharaoh says only the males can go; Moses insists they take all their people and animals
  - Pharaoh agrees women and children can go, but not animals; Moses says animals are needed for sacrifice

# Exodus 6:2-11, 30 (P)

**2** And God said to Moses, “I am the Lord. **3** I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name the Lord I did not make myself known to them. **4** I also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they dwelt as sojourners. **5** Moreover I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold in bondage and I have remembered my covenant. **6** Say therefore to the people of Israel, ‘I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment, **7** and I will take you for my people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. **8** And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; I will give it to you for a possession. I am the Lord.’” **9** Moses spoke thus to the people of Israel; but they did not listen to Moses, because of their broken spirit and their cruel bondage. And the Lord said to Moses, **11** “Go in, tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the people of Israel go out of his land.” ...<redactor text>... **30** But Moses said to the Lord, “Behold, I am of uncircumcised lips; how then shall Pharaoh listen to me?”

# The Plagues Begin

- Exodus 7:1-13 (P)
  - Moses and Aaron meet Pharaoh, and perform the rod/serpent sign, but Pharaoh's sorcerers do the same and Pharaoh declines their demand
- Exodus 7:14-24 (E and P)
  - Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh again and turn the Nile into blood (the first plague), but Pharaoh rejects the demand
- Exodus 7:25-8:15 (E and P)
  - The second plague (frogs)

# Exodus 7:1-13 (P)

**1** And the Lord said to Moses, “See, I make you as God to Pharaoh; and Aaron your brother shall be your prophet. **2** You shall speak all that I command you; and Aaron your brother 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, **4** Pharaoh will not listen to you; then I will lay my hand upon Egypt and bring forth my hosts, my people the sons of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of judgment. **5** And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch forth my hand upon Egypt and bring out the people of Israel from among them.” **6** And Moses and Aaron did so; they did as the Lord commanded them. **7** Now Moses was eighty years old, and Aaron eighty-three years old, when they spoke to Pharaoh.

**8** And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, **9** “When Pharaoh says to you, ‘Prove yourselves by working a miracle,’ then you shall say to Aaron, ‘Take your rod and cast it down before Pharaoh, that it may become a serpent.’” **10** So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did as the Lord commanded; Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and his servants, and it became a serpent. **11** Then Pharaoh summoned the wise men and the sorcerers; and they also, the magicians of Egypt, did the same by their secret arts. **12** For every man cast down his rod, and they became serpents. But Aaron’s rod swallowed up their rods. **13** Still Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them; as the Lord had said.

# Exodus 7:14-19 (P and E)

<sup>14</sup> Then the Lord said to Moses, “Pharaoh’s heart is hardened, he refuses to let the people go. <sup>15</sup> Go to Pharaoh in the morning, as he is going out to the water; wait for him by the river’s brink, and take in your hand the rod which was turned into a snake. <sup>16</sup> 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; and behold, you have not yet obeyed.” <sup>17</sup> Thus says the Lord, “By this you shall know that I am the Lord: behold, I will strike the water that is in the Nile with the rod that is in my hand, and it shall be turned to blood, <sup>18</sup> and the fish in the Nile shall die, and the Nile shall become foul, and the Egyptians will loathe to drink water from the Nile.”’” <sup>19</sup> And the Lord said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Take your rod and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, their canals, and their ponds, and all their pools of water, that they may become blood; and there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.’”

# Exodus 7:20-24 (P and E)

<sup>20</sup> Moses and Aaron did as the Lord commanded; in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants, he lifted up the rod and struck the water that was in the Nile, and all the water that was in the Nile turned to blood. <sup>21</sup> And the fish in the Nile died; and the Nile became foul, so that the Egyptians could not drink water from the Nile; and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt. <sup>22</sup> But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts; so Pharaoh's heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them; as the Lord had said. <sup>23</sup> Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and he did not lay even this to heart. <sup>24</sup> And all the Egyptians dug round about the Nile for water to drink, for they could not drink the water of the Nile.

# Exodus 7:25-8:7 (E and P)

7<sup>25</sup> Seven days passed after the Lord had struck the Nile.

8 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. <sup>2</sup> But if you refuse to let them go, behold, I will plague all your country with frogs; <sup>3</sup> the Nile shall swarm with frogs which shall come up into your house, and into your bedchamber and on your bed, and into the houses of your servants and of your people, and into your ovens and your kneading bowls; <sup>4</sup> the frogs shall come up on you and on your people and on all your servants.’””<sup>5</sup> And the Lord said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Stretch out your hand with your rod over the rivers, over the canals, and over the pools, and cause frogs to come upon the land of Egypt!’”<sup>6</sup> So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. <sup>7</sup> But the magicians did the same by their secret arts, and they brought frogs upon the land of Egypt.

# Exodus 8:8-15 (E and R)

**8** Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron, and said, “Entreat the Lord to take away the frogs from me and from my people; and I will let the people go to sacrifice to the Lord.” **9** Moses said to Pharaoh, “Be pleased to command me when I am to entreat, for you and for your servants and for your people, that the frogs be destroyed from you and your houses and be left only in the Nile.” **10** And he said, “Tomorrow.” Moses said, “Be it as you say, that you may know that there is no one like the Lord our God. **11** The frogs shall depart from you and your houses and your servants and your people; they shall be left only in the Nile.” **12** So Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh; and Moses cried to the Lord concerning the frogs, as he had agreed with Pharaoh. **13** And the Lord did according to the word of Moses; the frogs died out of the houses and courtyards and out of the fields. **14** And they gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank. **15** But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart, and would not listen to them; as the Lord had said.

# More Plagues

- Exodus 8:16-19 (P)
  - The 3rd plague (gnats)
- Exodus 8:20-26 (E)
  - The 4th plague (insects/flies)
- Exodus 9:1-7 (E)
  - The 5th plague (livestock epidemic)
- Exodus 9:8-12 (P)
  - The 6th plague (boils)
- Exodus 9:13-34 (E)
  - The 7th plague (hail)
- Note: in Exodus 8 there is a discrepancy in verse numbering between Hebrew and Greek texts

# Exodus 8:16-19 (P) - Gnats

**16** Then the Lord said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Stretch out your rod and strike the dust of the earth, that it may become gnats throughout all the land of Egypt.’” **17** And they did so; Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and struck the dust of the earth, and there came gnats on man and beast; all the dust of the earth became gnats throughout all the land of Egypt. **18** The magicians tried by their secret arts to bring forth gnats, but they could not. So there were gnats on man and beast. **19** And the magicians said to Pharaoh, “This is the finger of God.” But Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them; as the Lord had said.

# Exodus 8:20-24 (E) Insects

<sup>20</sup> Then the Lord said to Moses, “Rise up early in the morning and wait for Pharaoh, as he goes out to the water, and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. <sup>21</sup> Else, if you will not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies on you and your servants and your people, and into your houses; and the houses of the Egyptians shall be filled with swarms of flies, and also the ground on which they stand. <sup>22</sup> But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where my people dwell, so that no swarms of flies shall be there; that you may know that I am the Lord in the midst of the earth. <sup>23</sup> Thus I will put a division between my people and your people. By tomorrow shall this sign be.’”” <sup>24</sup> And the Lord did so; there came great swarms of flies into the house of Pharaoh and into his servants’ houses, and in all the land of Egypt the land was ruined by reason of the flies.

# Exodus 9:1-7 (E) Livestock

**9** Then the Lord said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh, and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. **2** For if you refuse to let them go and still hold them, **3** behold, the hand of the Lord will fall with a very severe plague upon your cattle which are in the field, the horses, the asses, the camels, the herds, and the flocks. **4** But the Lord will make a distinction between the cattle of Israel and the cattle of Egypt, so that nothing shall die of all that belongs to the people of Israel.’”” **5** And the Lord set a time, saying, “Tomorrow the Lord will do this thing in the land.” **6** And on the morrow the Lord did this thing; all the cattle of the Egyptians died, but of the cattle of the people of Israel not one died. **7** And Pharaoh sent, and behold, not one of the cattle of the Israelites was dead. But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.

# Exodus 9:8-12 (P) Boils

**9** <sup>8</sup> And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “Take handfuls of ashes from the kiln, and let Moses throw them toward heaven in the sight of Pharaoh. <sup>9</sup> And it shall become fine dust over all the land of Egypt, and become boils breaking out in sores on man and beast throughout all the land of Egypt.” <sup>10</sup> So they took ashes from the kiln, and stood before Pharaoh, and Moses threw them toward heaven, and it became boils breaking out in sores on man and beast. <sup>11</sup> And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils, for the boils were upon the magicians and upon all the Egyptians. <sup>12</sup> But the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he did not listen to them; as the Lord had spoken to Moses.

# Exodus 9:13-34 (E) Hail

**13** Then the Lord said to Moses, “Rise up early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh, and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. **14** For this time I will send all my plagues upon your heart, and upon your servants and your people, that you may know that there is none like me in all the earth. **15** For by now I could have put forth my hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth; **16** but for this purpose have I let you live, to show you my power, so that my name may be declared throughout all the earth. **17** You are still exalting yourself against my people, and will not let them go. **18** Behold, tomorrow about this time I will cause very heavy hail to fall, such as never has been in Egypt from the day it was founded until now. **19** Now therefore send, get your cattle and all that you have in the field into safe shelter; for the hail shall come down upon every man and beast that is in the field and is not brought home, and they shall die.’”” **20** Then he who feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made his slaves and his cattle flee into the houses; **21** but he who did not regard the word of the Lord left his slaves and his cattle in the field.

# Exodus 9:13-34 (E) Hail

**22** And the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch forth your hand toward heaven, that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt, upon man and beast and every plant of the field, throughout the land of Egypt.”

**23** Then Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven; and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and fire ran down to the earth. And the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt; **24** there was hail, and fire flashing continually in the midst of the hail, very heavy hail, such as had never been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. **25** The hail struck down everything that was in the field throughout all the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and the hail struck down every plant of the field, and shattered every tree of the field. **26** Only in the land of Goshen, where the people of Israel were, there was no hail.

# Exodus 9:13-34 (E and R) Hail

**27** Then Pharaoh sent, and called Moses and Aaron, and said to them, “I have sinned this time; the Lord is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong. **28** Entreat the Lord; for there has been enough of this thunder and hail; I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer.” **29** Moses said to him, “As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will stretch out my hands to the Lord; the thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, that you may know that the earth is the Lord’s. **30** But as for you and your servants, I know that you do not yet fear the Lord God.” **31** (The flax and the barley were ruined, for the barley was in the ear and the flax was in bud. **32** But the wheat and the spelt were not ruined, for they are late in coming up.) **33** So Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh, and stretched out his hands to the Lord; and the thunder and the hail ceased, and the rain no longer poured upon the earth. **34** But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet again, and hardened his heart, he and his servants. **35** So the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people of Israel go; as the Lord had spoken through Moses.

# More Plagues

- Exodus 10:1-19 (E)
  - The 8th plague (locusts)
- Exodus 10:20 (R)
- Exodus 10:21-29 (E)
  - The 9th plague (darkness)
- Exodus 11:1-8 (E)
  - Moses announces the 10th plague (death of firstborn)

# Exodus 10:1-19 (E) Locusts

**10** Then the Lord said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that I may show these signs of mine among them, **2** and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and of your son’s son how I have made sport of the Egyptians and what signs I have done among them; that you may know that I am the Lord.”

**3** So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and said to him, “Thus says the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, ‘How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go, that they may serve me. **4** For if you refuse to let my people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring locusts into your country, **5** and they shall cover the face of the land, so that no one can see the land; and they shall eat what is left to you after the hail, and they shall eat every tree of yours which grows in the field, **6** and they shall fill your houses, and the houses of all your servants and of all the Egyptians; as neither your fathers nor your grandfathers have seen, from the day they came on earth to this day.’” Then he turned and went out from Pharaoh.

# Exodus 10:1-19 (E) Locusts

**7** And Pharaoh's servants said to him, "How long shall this man be a snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve the Lord their God; do you not yet understand that Egypt is ruined?" **8** So Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh; and he said to them, "Go, serve the Lord your God; but who are to go?" **9** And Moses said, "We will go with our young and our old; we will go with our sons and daughters and with our flocks and herds, for we must hold a feast to the Lord."  
**10** And he said to them, "The Lord be with you, if ever I let you and your little ones go! Look, you have some evil purpose in mind. **11** No! Go, the men among you, and serve the Lord, for that is what you desire." And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.

# Exodus 10:1-19 (E) Locusts

**12** Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come upon the land of Egypt, and eat every plant in the land, all that the hail has left.” **13** So Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, and the Lord brought an east wind upon the land all that day and all that night; and when it was morning the east wind had brought the locusts. **14** And the locusts came up over all the land of Egypt, and settled on the whole country of Egypt, such a dense swarm of locusts as had never been before, nor ever shall be again. **15** For they covered the face of the whole land, so that the land was darkened, and they ate all the plants in the land and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left; not a green thing remained, neither tree nor plant of the field, through all the land of Egypt. **16** Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron in haste, and said, “I have sinned against the Lord your God, and against you. **17** Now therefore, forgive my sin, I pray you, only this once, and entreat the Lord your God only to remove this death from me.” **18** So he went out from Pharaoh, and entreated the Lord. **19** And the Lord turned a very strong west wind, which lifted the locusts and drove them into the Red Sea; not a single locust was left in all the country of Egypt.