

Opening Story:

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Subject: What Does 2020 Hold?

The two biggest prophetic fulfillments just ahead are a peace agreement between Palestinians and Israelis and the Sixth Trumpet War that will kill one-third of the human race. The Bible is not clear on which of these will come first but it presently looks like the peace agreement will most likely occur first.

The prophecy of the coming peace agreement is found in **Daniel 9:27**,

“And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

Let's briefly explain the prophecy. The “he” in verse 27 is the Antichrist.

The covenant he will confirm is God's covenant with Abraham described in **Genesis 15:18**.

“In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.”

So, the covenant is God's promise that the land of Israel will belong to the descendants of Abraham forever. The Confirmation of the Covenant will be when the Antichrist confirms that Israel has a right to live as a nation in the land God promised to Abraham.

The passage says this confirming of the covenant will last for a week of years or seven years.

This prophesied peace agreement will contain five elements:

- **The area of Judea (also known as the West Bank) will be given to the Palestinians as their homeland.**
- **The Jews living in the Palestinian homeland will be allowed to remain, living as a Jewish minority in the new Palestinian homeland.**
- **The Temple Mount will be placed under a sharing arrangement so that both Muslims and Jews will be allowed to worship there.**
- **The Jews will be allowed to build their temple on the Temple Mount without disturbing the Dome of the Rock or the Al-Aqsa Mosque.**
- **The issue of control over Jerusalem will remain unresolved. Consequently, its status will be put off until later, apparently seven years later.**

Immediately after his election, President Trump told the Wall Street Journal that his number one goal as president would be to negotiate a peace agreement between the Palestinians and Israelis. He said it was the deal that seemed impossible but that he would like to try to do it.



By January 2019, Trump's peace plan was completed. He called it “The Deal of the Century”. Just before this, Israel's government had collapsed, and new elections were scheduled for April 9, 2019. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu urged Trump to delay the unveiling of his peace plan until after the elections. Trump consented.

The Israeli elections ended in a virtual dead heat. Neither major party was able to muster enough votes to establish a government. Netanyahu dissolved the government and set September 17 as the date for new elections. Again, President Trump delayed the release of his peace plan.

When the election returns came in, once again, neither major party had the necessary votes to assemble a government.

Currently, neither Benjamin Netanyahu nor Benny Gantz has been able to form a government and new elections have been scheduled for March 2nd.

We do know eventually Israel will have a new government.

However, President Trump has now invited Benjamin Netanyahu and Benny Gantz to the White House on January 28, to present to them the peace plan. He also said he will reveal the plan before they arrive. This very well could be the peace plan prophesied in the Bible.

President Donald Trump announced that his **"Deal of the Century"** for peace in the #MiddleEast would be revealed before Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visits the White House next week. <https://www.jpost.com/Breaking-News/Trump-I-will-release-the-Middle-East-peace-plan-before-Netanyahu-visit-615198> ... **The Jerusalem Post** - [✓@Jerusalem Post](https://www.jpost.com) ... **Trump: I will release the Middle East peace plan before Netanyahu visit** ... [jpost.com](https://www.jpost.com) ... **3:38 PM - Jan 23, 2020** ... Twitter Ads info and privacy

When Palestinians and Israelis agree to accept the prophesied plan, the Bible states the Final Seven Years to Armageddon and the Second Coming of Jesus will begin.

The Final 7 Years prophecy is one of the few prophecies with a specific timeline attached to it. It begins with a peace plan between Israel and the Palestinians. Could it be signed this Year? There is a very good chance the Final Seven Years could begin in 2020.

The Purpose of the Message today, to learn:

When God speaks a Word, it will be done as He has said, despite how circumstances appear in the natural.

... and ...

We are delivered through faith in Jesus, the Passover Lamb, not simply to walk away and “do our own thing.” As it was for the Israelites, the purpose of our freedom is to serve the living God.

Week 14 - VA’ERA (And I Appeared)
Exodus 6:2–9:35; Ezekiel 28:25–29:21, Revelation 15:1–16:20

“When God speaks a Word, it will be done as He has said, despite how circumstances appear in the natural.”

“And I appeared [va’era] to Abraham (Avraham), Isaac (Yitzhak), and Jacob (Yaacov) as El Shaddai (Lord God Almighty) but by My name, YHVH (“Havayah” – One Name to Rule Them All – The God Above all gods and Above all laws of nature), I did not make Myself known to them.”
Exodus 6:2–3

AND ELOKIM (G-D) SPOKE TO MOSES AND HE SAID TO HIM, I AM HAVAYAH!” (6:2)

*“That **“Havayah”** is greater than (any) Elokim,” Exodus 18:11 (and Ex. 6:2) . . . All the miracles performed by G-d in Egypt which defied all known laws of nature, were invoked by this In – ef – fa – ble (too great or extreme to be expressed or described in words) **Four-lettered Name of God**. All other attributes (i.e. names) of G-d are derived from the Ineffable Name, **“Havayah”** (One Name to Rule Them All), which symbolized G-d as a composite of the Hebrew words from “He **was**, He **is**, He **will be**”, the One who created the world and Who is eternal. The name “Elokim”, on the other hand, symbolizes nature (i.e. the laws of nature).*

Hebrews 13:8

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday (was) and today (is) and forever (will be).

It is here that we learn the name that God uses to demonstrate His Redemption, **“Havayah”** (the Ineffable (too great or extreme to be expressed or described in words) Four-lettered Name of G-d – “Now that’s a Four-Letter Word worth using!”).

Pharaoh had no difficulty in accepting G-d in His attribute as Elokim . . . but when the Torah writes, *“And **Havayah** hardened Pharaoh’s heart”, the meaning is that it was the use of that name that made Pharaoh’s heart become obstinate.* This the reason that Moses never used a different name for G-d when confronting Pharaoh.

Pharaoh duped himself . . .

In this we realize that G-d never interfered with Pharaoh’s decision-making process at all. Pharaoh duped himself. The case of his obstinacy was the meaning “I”, as in **“I am Havayah”** (6:2 and Ex. 4:22). When G-d said to Moses, *“I shall make the heart of Pharaoh obstinate”* (7:3), the implied meaning is: *“My revelation to him that **I am Havayah**, will harden his heart” . . . Pharaoh, therefore, limited his acknowledgement of the origin of G-d’s claim, “I am”, to Elokim, thereby excluding Havayah.*

In last week’s Torah study, **God appeared to Moses at the foot of Mount Sinai in a burning bush, instructing him to lead the Israelites out of Pharaoh’s bondage.** Because Moses perceived himself to be slow of speech, God appointed his brother Aaron to be his spokesperson.

When the brothers went before Pharaoh, he refused to let the Israelites go. **Instead of making the situation better, the Israelites’ enslavement became more oppressive** as Pharaoh required them to gather their own straw (whereas previously it had been provided for them) and still produce the same quota of bricks.

Of course, the children of Israel complained to Moses, so he brought their suffering before God. God reassured Moses that things would turn around. He told him that He would not only save the Israelites with a mighty deliverance, but Pharaoh would drive them from Egypt.

God Redeems Israel Past, Present and Future

In this Reading, God promises Moses that He will accomplish four redemptive acts:

Exodus 6:6-7

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 slavery to them, and **I will redeem you** with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. ⁷ **I will take you to be 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.

1. He would **bring out** the Israelites from their suffering in Egypt,
2. **rescue** them from slavery,
3. **redeem** them from their oppression with His outstretched arm, and
4. **take** them as His own nation.

These four promises are called the Four Expressions of Redemption, and they are traditionally commemorated during the Passover Seder (ritual meal) with four cups of wine. With each cup meaning the following:

- **Cup One: Hotzeiti (הוצאתי)**, which means I will bring out;
- **Cup Two: Hitzalti (הצלת)**, which means I will rescue;
- **Cup Three: Ga’alti (גאלתי)**, which means I will redeem; and
- **Cup Four: Lakachti (לקחתי)**, which means I will take.

God also makes a **fifth expression of redemption**. He promises He will bring (**heveiti הבעיתי**) His people back into their own land.

Exodus 6:8

⁸ **I will bring you into the land** that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it to you for a possession. I am the LORD.”

Two thousand years ago, when the Jewish People lived in the Promised Land, this **fifth expression** may have been commemorated with a fifth cup of wine during the Seder.

Although God has been rescuing the Jewish people from their exile and bringing them back into the Land, **the fifth cup is considered to represent a complete Redemption through Messiah.**

- **Fifth Cup:** This fifth cup at the Passover Seder, therefore, is called the **Cup of Elijah**, which is left untouched for the **Prophet Elijah**, who is expected to return to earth **to herald the coming of the Messiah and His Messianic reign.**

Matthew 17 The Transfiguration

¹ And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. ² And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. ³ And behold, there appeared to them Moses and **Elijah**, talking with him. ⁴ And Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for **Elijah**.” ⁵ He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.” ⁶ When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. ⁷ But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “Rise, and have no fear.” ⁸ And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

⁹ And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, “Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead.” ¹⁰ And the disciples asked him, “Then why do the scribes say that first **Elijah** must come?” ¹¹ He answered, “**Elijah** does come, and he will restore all things. ¹² But I tell you that **Elijah** has already come, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of Man will certainly suffer at their hands.” ¹³ Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist.

Revelation 11 The Two Witnesses

¹ Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told, “Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there, ² but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will

trample the holy city for forty-two months (3 ½ Years).³ And I will grant authority to my two witnesses (Moses & Elijah), and they will prophesy for 1,260 days (3 ½ Years), clothed in sackcloth.”

⁴These are the two olive trees (Moses & Elijah) and the two lampstands (Moses & Elijah) that stand before the Lord of the earth. ⁵And if anyone would harm them, fire pours from their mouth and consumes their foes. If anyone would harm them, this is how he is doomed to be killed. ⁶They have the power to shut the sky, that no rain may fall during the days of their prophesying, and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague, as often as they desire. ⁷And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer them and kill them, ⁸and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city that symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified. ⁹For three and a half days some from the peoples and tribes and languages and nations will gaze at their dead bodies and refuse to let them be placed in a tomb, ¹⁰and those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and make merry and exchange presents, because these two prophets had been a torment to those who dwell on the earth. ¹¹But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood up on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. ¹²Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here!” And they went up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched them. ¹³And at that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

When God speaks a Word, it will be done as He has said, despite how circumstances appear in the natural.

Still, we live in a fallen world. **Many of us suffer from spiritual short-sightedness caused by focusing on our own suffering and loss.**

The Israelites were no different. **They were so downtrodden and grieved in spirit that they simply could not believe what Moses said the Lord would do for them:**

They couldn't even listen to his words of hope.

Exodus 6:9

⁹Moses spoke thus to the people of Israel, but **they did not listen** to Moses, **because of their broken spirit and harsh slavery.**

This should remind us to be patient and merciful with ourselves, as well as those we minister to.

Even today, there are **those whose bondage is so cruel and whose spirit so broken that they also cannot hear those who preach the Good News.** Sometimes, they must watch us walk in the power of God, seeing signs and wonders before they will listen and believe.

We must faithfully be people who sow seeds, patiently waiting as God grows them.

"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow." 1 Corinthians 3:6

As God had commanded them, Moses and his brother Aaron **returned to Pharaoh over and over again,** **demanding that he let God's people go so that they may serve Him** in the wilderness.

This whole account of God's redemption of Israel from Egypt has a spiritual parallel in our salvation from the kingdom of darkness, ruled by Satan and the Kingdom of Light, ruled by God. Following are those spiritual parallels:

“The Story of the Israelites Who Came Out of Egypt”

Let's be reminded of the parallels:

- The Israelites were in bondage while living in Egypt.
 - Christians were in bondage to sin while living in the world.
- On the night of their deliverance the Israelites applied the blood of an unblemished lamb to the lintel and doorposts of their homes. Then they entered through the door and were spared by the death angel when he recognized the blood on their doorways (Exodus 12).
 - Jesus Christ is the unblemished Lamb of God. His blood was smeared on the cross of Calvary in the same pattern as the Israelites applied it. The lintel is where the crown of thorns caused the blood to flow from His head and doorposts are where the nails pierced His hands (John 10:9).
- The Israelites were all under the cloud (the specific cloud that is being talked about is called the Sh'khinah: the cloud of glory) and all passed through The Red Sea. And all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea (1 Corinthians 10:1-2).
 - Christians are all baptized into Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit and in water (1 John 5:7-8).
- The Israelites received the Law of Moses written on tablets of stone at Mt Sinai.

- Christians received the Law of Christ written on their hearts at Mt Zion (Jeremiah 31:31-34, Hebrews 8:1-13).
- The Israelites all ate the same spiritual food ... manna, the bread from heaven.
 - Christians all eat the same spiritual food ... communion bread, which is the body of Christ.
- The Israelites all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from the spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ.
 - Christians all drink the same spiritual drink ... communion wine, which is the blood of Christ.
- God was not pleased with **most** of the Israelites and they died in the wilderness. These people 1) craved evil things, 2) were idolaters, 3) acted immorally, 4) tried the Lord, and 5) grumbled against Him. They did not enter the Promised Land because of their unbelief (lack of faith).
 - Christians are cautioned against doing these things.
- The Israelites never lacked for food, clothing or shelter on their journey.
 - Christians will not lack for food, clothing or shelter in their life.
- When the Israelites engaged in battle they always won.
 - When Christians engage in spiritual warfare they always win.
- The Israelites had their sins forgiven when they confessed them while laying their hands upon the head of a lamb.
 - Christians have their sins forgiven when they confess them to Jesus, the Lamb of God.
- The Israelites were healed of their afflictions when by faith they looked to the bronze serpent on the staff.
 - Christians are healed when they look to Jesus Christ who was crucified on the cross.
- The Israelites entered the Promised Land following Joshua.
 - Christians will enter the Promised Land (Heaven) following Joshua.

The reason I used the name Joshua here is to make the point that Jesus’ name in Hebrew is Yawshua (Joshua), which means, “I AM SALVATION”. You should be reminded that Moses could not take the Israelites into the Promised Land because of his disobedience. This occurred when he struck the Rock, which was Christ, a second time to bring forth water. God had told Moses to speak to the Rock and it would bring forth water. The effect of this was that Moses gave a false prophetic sign: saying the Christ would be struck twice. However God only permitted His Son, Jesus, the Christ to be struck once: on the Lord’s Passover . . . at His trials, beatings and crucifixion. Moses also told the Israelites, “God shall raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren.” The book of Numbers 27:12-23, indicates that it was Joshua whom God chose and it was he who led the Israelites into the Promised Land. Jewish people today have never made this connection concerning Jesus (Yawshua or Joshua) Christ as the one prophet who will lead the people to the Promised Land (Heaven).

We are delivered through faith in Jesus, the Passover Lamb, not simply to walk away and “do our own thing.” As it was for the Israelites:

The purpose of our freedom is to serve the living God.

Colossians 1:13–14

“For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

1 Peter 2:9-10

*“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession,
that you may PROCLAIM the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”*

Pharaoh Remains Proudful Despite Marvels and Wonders

God gave Moses and Aaron a special sign to show Pharaoh, which in Hebrew word "sign" means "a marvel or wonder". Aaron was to throw his stick down before Pharaoh, and it would be transformed. In most English translations, we read that the stick became a serpent; but in the Hebrew, the word used is **tannin**, which means a crocodile.

However, Pharaoh, as God foreknew, still refused to let the people go; therefore, God sent His judgment on Egypt in the form of the Ten Plagues.

“Pharaoh will not listen to you. Then I will lay My hand on Egypt and bring My hosts, My people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of judgment.” Exodus 7:4

These plagues are remembered each year at the Passover Seder during the second cup of wine. One drop is removed from the cup for each of the plagues, while the leader recites the list of judgments in Hebrew.

The idea behind this custom is that our cup (which represents joy) cannot be full while others are suffering.

First, the waters of the Nile River were turned to blood, **making it undrinkable**. Then frogs swarmed the land, and then an infestation of lice tormented man and beast.

Until the **plague of lice**, the Egyptian magicians and sorcerers were able to duplicate the plagues but, with this plague, they could not. Therefore, **they recognized this to be the finger of God**.

"Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh: 'This is the finger of God'; and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had spoken." Exodus 8:19

The 10 Plagues – "Havayah" Versus the Gods of Egypt

*Havayah (One Name to Rule Them All – The God Above all gods and Above all laws of nature)

1. WATER TURNED TO BLOOD - Exodus 7:14-25

Egyptian God: Guardian of river's source - Spirit of the Nile/Nile was his bloodstream.

- Duplicated by the Egyptians.

2. FROGS - Exodus 8:1-15

Egyptian God: Frog goddess to Egypt - Related to fertility.

- Duplicated by the Egyptians.

3. LICE - Exodus 8:16-19

Egyptian God: The earth god of Egypt.

- Not duplicated by the Egyptians.
- Attributed to the "finger of God."

4. Flies - Exodus 8:20-32

Egyptian God: The fly god of Egypt.

- Not duplicated by the Egyptians.
- Attributed to the "finger of God."
- God now makes a separation between the Egyptians and the Israelites.
- No more plagues will come upon the Israelites.

5. DISEASE ON CATTLE - Exodus 9:1-7

Egyptian God: associated bulls and cows.

- Affects property
- Death of livestock.
- Not duplicated by the Egyptians.
- God makes a separation between the Egyptians and the Israelites.
- No more plagues will come upon the Israelites.

6. BOILS - Exodus 9:8-12

Egyptian God: gods of healing.

- Affects physical bodies.
- Pharaoh's magicians cannot even appear in court.
- Not duplicated by the Egyptians.
- God makes a separation between the Egyptians and the Israelites.
- No more plagues will come upon the Israelites.

7. HAIL - Exodus 9:13-35

Egyptian God: sky goddess.

- Not duplicated by the Egyptians.
- God makes a separation between the Egyptians and the Israelites.

- No more plagues will come upon the Israelites.

8. LOCUSTS - Exodus 10:1-20

Egyptian God: deity protector from Locusts.

- Not duplicated by the Egyptians.
- God makes a separation between the Egyptians and the Israelites.
- No more plagues will come upon the Israelites.

9. DARKNESS - Exodus 10:21-29

Egyptian God: sun gods.

- Not duplicated by the Egyptians.
- God makes a separation between the Egyptians and the Israelites.
- No more plagues will come upon the Israelites.

10. DEATH OF FIRSTBORN - Exodus 12:29-36

This plague was a judgment on all of Egypt's gods, including Pharaoh himself. In Exodus 1, Pharaoh had killed the sons of Israel. Now the Lord kills the firstborn sons of the Egyptians (Exodus 11-12). Pharaoh will now let Israel go. He will later loose his army to death in the Red Sea (Exodus 14:4-31)

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 10

In the Bible, the number 10 is used 242 times. The designation "10th" is used 79 times. Ten is also viewed as a complete and perfect number, as is 3, 7 and 12. It is made up of 4, the number of the physical creation, and 6, the number of man. As such, **it signifies testimony, law, responsibility and the completeness of order.**

In Genesis 1 we find the phrase "God said" 10 times, which is a testimony of His creative power. God gave the 10 Commandments to man. Ten therefore represents man's responsibility to keep the commandments. A tithe is a 10th of our earnings and is a testimony of our faith in the Lord.

The Passover lamb was selected on the 10th day of the 1st month (Exodus 12:3), as was Jesus, the Lamb that takes away the sins of the world (John 12:28 - 29; 1Corinthians 5:7). The 10th day of the 7th month is the Holy Day known as the Day of Atonement. This unique day of fasting pictures the removal of Satan, the author of sin, before the Millennial reign of Jesus begins (Revelation 20:1 - 2). The last great world-ruling kingdom of man under Satan is symbolized prophetically by the 10 toes of Daniel 2 and the 10 horns of Revelation 13 and 17.

Exodus 7:1-7

Moses and Aaron Before Pharaoh

And the LORD said to Moses, "See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet. 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, ⁴ Pharaoh will not listen to you. Then I will lay my hand on Egypt and bring my hosts, my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of judgment. ⁵ The Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring out the people of Israel from among them." ⁶ Moses and Aaron did so; they did just as the LORD commanded them. ⁷ Now Moses was eighty years old, and Aaron eighty-three years old, when they spoke to Pharaoh.

⁸ Then 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 staff and cast it down before Pharaoh, that it may become a serpent.**'" ¹⁰ So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as the Lord commanded. Aaron cast down his staff before Pharaoh and his servants, and it became a serpent. ¹¹ Then Pharaoh summoned the wise men and the sorcerers, and they, the magicians of Egypt, also did the same by their secret arts. ¹² For each man cast down his staff, and they became serpents. But **Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs.** ¹³ Still **Pharaoh's heart was hardened**, and he would not listen to them, as the Lord had said.

AND AARON'S ROD SWALLOWED UP THEIR RODS (7:12)

G-d said: "If Aaron's serpent will swallow up the serpents of the Egyptians, there will be nothing remarkable in that, for serpents usually swallow each other. Therefore let it resume its original form and swallow up their serpents."

(Midrash Rabbah)

The Torah's "ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace" - (Proverbs 3:17) - our task is to create light, not to battle darkness.

Nevertheless, there are times when we are forced to resort to battle, when we must vanquish those who seek to vanquish us. Thus Moses, the gentle shepherd of Israel, and Aaron, the ultimate man of peace, find themselves in the role of "judge and chastiser of Pharaoh," crushing the might of Egypt and obliterating its icons and myths.

Therein lies the lesson to be derived from the fact that Aaron's rod swallowed the "serpents of the Egyptians" after it had reverted back to its original form, rather than as a serpent itself. For even when he wages war, the Jew is not a warrior. Even when he consumes the serpents

of the enemy, he is not a serpent himself, spewing poison and hate. His instrument of vengeance is as devoid of vengeful feeling as a petrified rod, as cold to the rage of war as a lifeless stick.

(The Lubavitcher Rebbe)

Pharaoh had **hardened his heart** and would not listen to the voice of reason — one of the surest signs of pride. **A humble man will receive correction willingly, but a person with pride immediately becomes defensive and will not listen to others.** This can bring about his downfall:

Proverbs 16:18

Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.

Proverbs 9:8

Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you; reprove a **wise man**, and he will love you.

Proverbs 9:9

Give instruction to a **wise man**, and he will be still **wiser**; teach a righteous **man**, and he will increase in learning.

Proverbs 12:15

The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a **wise man** listens to advice.

Note the contrast between Pharaoh and Moses, who even today is considered to be the most humble man to walk the earth.

In contrast, Pharaoh's Heart was Hardened, which warrants the question: **Why did God harden Pharaoh's heart?**

The best, most direct, simple answer to this question is:

Exodus 9:16

¹⁶ **But for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.**

The reason that is the best, most direct, simple answer to the question is because it is God's own answer. See Exodus 9:16 and Romans 9:17. God raised up Pharaoh and hardened Pharaoh's heart in order to promote His own glory, as commented by Paul in Romans 9:17-24:

¹⁷ For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, “For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” ¹⁸ **So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.** ¹⁹ **You will say to me then, “Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?”** ²⁰ But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?” ²¹ Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use? ²² What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, **has endured with much patience** vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, ²³ in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory— ²⁴ even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?

Romans 9:27

²⁷ And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: “Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved . . .

“But,” you may say, “that doesn’t sound right to me. It just doesn't seem to me that God would arrange for a person to actually sin and rebel just to make Himself great.” At which point I would ask, “How do you propose that we determine the truth about what motivates the heart of God? Will we base our conclusions on our own feelings about what seems right? Or will we base our conclusions on what God Himself says in the Bible to be true about what motivates Him?” **I propose that when the Bible says that God hardened Pharaoh's heart, what it really means is that God simply facilitated a process that Pharaoh himself initiated.** After all, the Bible repeatedly also states that **Pharaoh hardened his own heart:**

Exodus 8:15

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.

Exodus 8:32

³² But **Pharaoh hardened his heart** this time also, and did not let the people go.

God did not directly harden Pharaoh's heart (or anyone else's heart for that matter) contrary to their own free choice, but only indirectly, through their own choice. *“God in His omniscience foreknew exactly how Pharaoh would respond, and He used it to accomplish His purposes. God ordained the means of Pharaoh's free but stubborn action...”*

Are we saying that God Himself actually arranged for Pharaoh to sin? Yes, in much the same sense that He arranged for Joseph's brothers to sell Joseph into slavery (Genesis 50:20), Satan to attack Job (Job 1:12), Jews and Romans to crucify Jesus (Acts 2:23), and sin to exist in the first place.

How many times did God give Pharaoh an opportunity to Repent (or Stop doing things his way and start doing things God's way) before He executed his Judgment on the Egyptians, in line with setting His people Free from over 400 years of Bondage, which got set in motion over eighty years earlier through the Birth of Moses.

The answer is, **12 opportunities** God gave Pharaoh the opportunity to Repent.

The Meaning of Numbers: The Number 12

Twelve can be found in 187 places in God's word. Revelation alone has 22 occurrences of the number. The meaning of 12, which is considered a perfect number, is that it symbolizes God's power and authority (God's divine authority - Matthew 28:18), as well as serving as a perfect governmental foundation. It can also symbolize completeness or the nation of **Israel as a whole**.

Although Pharaoh promised to let the Jewish People go after the plague of lice, he hardened his heart and reneged on his promise. As a result, *God sent swarms of flies* that covered the land, then a **disease that killed all the cattle**.

God made a distinction between Israel and Egypt. While all the cattle of Egypt died, not even one of Israel's cattle fell to the disease. **Exodus 9:4**

This underlines the importance and reliability of being in a covenantal relationship with the Almighty God. None of Egypt's best sorcerers and masters of the occult could save them from the hand of God.

In the **sixth plague**, when God turned dust into painful boils upon man and beast, even the magicians suffered, and they could not stand before Moses because of them. **Exodus 9:9–11**

This week's Reading ends with the seventh plague of hail.

God sent thunder, fire and a grievous hail that destroyed anything and everything in the field — man and beast and all vegetation. **Only in Goshen, where the Israelites lived, was there no hail.** **Exodus 9:26**

AND THE THUNDERS AND HAIL CEASED, AND THE RAIN WAS NO LONGER POURED UPON THE EARTH (9:33)
The hailstones which were on the way down when Moses prayed were suspended in midair, and did not reach the earth. When did they descend? In the days of Joshua they descended upon the Amorites, as it is written (Joshua 10:11): *“And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel... that G-d cast down great stones from heaven upon them.”* **The remainder will descend in the days of Gog and Magog.**

Exodus 8:22

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.

Like Egypt, Like the World

We know from the book of Revelation that many of these plagues will again strike the inhabitants of the earth in the end times. **These events that happened in Egypt foreshadow what is to come — possibly on a global scale — in the final days.**



Revelation 15-16

The Seven Angels with Seven Plagues

15 Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and amazing, seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is finished.

² And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire—and also those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands. ³ And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying,

(Exodus 15:14-16 – “Song of Moses”)
“Great and amazing are your deeds,
O Lord God the Almighty!
Just and true are your ways,
O King of the nations!^[a]
⁴ Who will not fear, O Lord,
and glorify your name?
For you alone are holy.
All nations will come
and worship you,
for your righteous acts have been revealed.”

⁵ After this I looked, and the sanctuary of the tent of witness in heaven was opened (the Feast of Atonement – only once a year – when the Messiah will return), ⁶ and out of the sanctuary came the seven angels with the seven plagues, clothed in pure, bright linen, with golden sashes around their chests. ⁷ And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever, ⁸ and the sanctuary was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the sanctuary until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

The Seven Bowls of God's Wrath

16 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple telling the seven angels, “Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God.”

“For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. . .” 1 Thessalonians 5:9

² So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth, and harmful and painful sores came upon the people who bore the mark of the beast and worshiped its image.

³ The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became like the blood of a corpse, and every living thing died that was in the sea.

⁴ The third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water, and they became blood. ⁵ And I heard the angel in charge of the waters say,

“Just are you, O Holy One, who is and who was,
for you brought these judgments.
⁶ For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets,
and you have given them blood to drink.
It is what they deserve!”
⁷ And I heard the altar saying,
“Yes, Lord God the Almighty,
true and just are your judgments!”

⁸ The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to scorch people with fire. ⁹ They were scorched by the fierce heat, and they cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues. They did not repent and give him glory.

¹⁰ The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom was plunged into darkness. People gnawed their tongues in anguish ¹¹ and cursed the God of heaven for their pain and sores. They did not repent of their deeds.

¹² The **sixth angel poured out his bowl** on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, to prepare the way for the kings from the east. ¹³ And I saw, coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, **three unclean spirits like frogs**. ¹⁴ For they are demonic spirits, performing signs, who go abroad to the kings of the whole world, to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty. ¹⁵ (“Behold, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed!”) ¹⁶ And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called **Armageddon**.

The Seventh Bowl

¹⁷ The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, “It is done!” ¹⁸ And there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as there had never been since man was on the earth, so great was that earthquake. ¹⁹ The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered Babylon the great, to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath. ²⁰ And every island fled away, and

no mountains were to be found.²¹ And **great hailstones** (the **Seventh plague of Exodus** resumes – Exodus 9:13-15), about one hundred pounds each, fell from heaven on people; and they cursed God for the plague of the hail, because the plague was so severe.

In his vision, John describes the **seven last plagues** on the earth:

*“I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the **seven last plagues**; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.” Revelation 15:1*

As God pours out the full bowl of His wrath upon the earth, loathsome **sores** appear on all those who have taken the mark of the beast and worship his image (*Revelation 16:2*). Then, just like in Egypt, the waters turn to **blood** (*Revelation 16:3–6*). Other plagues also bombard the earth, such as **darkness**, **scorching fire**, and **destructive hail**.

“From the sky huge hailstones, each weighing about a hundred pounds, fell on people. And they cursed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so terrible.” Revelation 16:21

May we be ever mindful that we are living in the end times; and while we remain safe in the security of our holy covenant with God, let us patiently share the Good News and diligently pray for mercy upon those who stubbornly continue to rebel against God.

"You will again have compassion on us; **You will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.**" Micah 7:19

Conclusion:

When God speaks a Word, it will be done as He has said, despite how circumstances appear in the natural.

... and ...

We are delivered through faith in Jesus, the Passover Lamb, not simply to walk away and “do our own thing.” As it was for the Israelites, the purpose of our freedom is to serve the living God.

Next Week’s Reading:

Week 15 - Parasha Bo (Come!)
Exodus 10:1–13:16; Jeremiah 46:13–28; Revelation 9:1–21

Week 14 – VA’ERA (And I Appeared)

Exodus 6:2–9:35; Ezekiel 28:25–29:21, Revelation 15:1–16:20

***“When God speaks a Word, it will be done as He has said,
despite how circumstances appear in the natural.”***