

# Exodus 11: Biblical Reading and Reflections

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[ 0 : 00 ] Exodus chapter 11 So Moses said, Dog shall growl against any of the people of Israel, either man or beast, that you may know that the Lord makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.

And all these your servants shall come down to me and bow down to me, saying, Get out, you and all the people who follow you. And after that I will go out.

And he went out from Pharaoh in hot anger. Then the Lord said to Moses, Pharaoh will not listen to you, that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt. Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh, and the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the people of Israel go out of his land.

The short chapter of Exodus 11 is an interlude between the nine plagues of the first three cycles of plagues, and then the great judgment of the final plague. At this point the three cycles have been completed, and we're in that period of waiting for the final hammer blow to fall, the decisive plague to end them all.

This is about April time. The plagues began in August, so there's been a few months of just one blow after another upon the nation of Egypt. The word for plague used in verse 1 here isn't found elsewhere in the plague narrative, but it's used in reference to leprosy in Leviticus 13.

[ 2 : 18 ] This might suggest that what's in view is some sort of disease. Very often we're trying to think of some purely supernatural explanation for these things, and fail to see God's demonstration of his power over all things in his creation.

The time for warning and repentance has now passed, and we're moving towards the closing of the curtain. Moses is instructed to address the people of Israel rather than Pharaoh at this point.

Although he does speak to Pharaoh, Pharaoh no longer seems to be a key player.

The focus in this section is upon relations between Israelites and Egyptians. The Egyptians and the Egyptian officials honour and fear Moses over Pharaoh, and indeed Moses says that it will be the Egyptian officials that ask them to leave the land, because they are the ones that see the severity of the situation.

The Egyptians are favourably inclined towards the Israelites, so the Israelites can ask for gold and silver jewellery, and they're given it. This was foretold in Exodus 3, 21-22.

And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, and when you go, you shall not go empty. But each woman shall ask of her neighbour, and any woman who lives in her house, for silver and gold jewellery, and for clothing.

[ 3 : 28 ] You shall put them on your sons and on your daughters, so you shall plunder the Egyptians. We see this again in Genesis chapter 15 verse 14, where God says to Abraham that they'll go out of the land of their captivity with great treasures.

You can also think of that theme of plundering in the book of Genesis. As Abraham leaves Egypt with many great gifts that he's been given, and Jacob leaves the house of Laban with great riches that he's gained during his time there.

The way that the plague is described is in terms of a cry and silence. And it's also described in the context of themes of mastery, that Moses will be treated as the one who's greater than Pharaoh, that people will bow to him.

There seems to be an inversion of themes of slavery here, that Pharaoh has his house of slaves, but now the slaves are being taken from him too.

They're bowing to Moses, they're recognising his authority, and the authority of Moses' God, over the stubborn Pharaoh that rules over them. You can also think in this context of the cry of Israel that went up to the Lord, and now it will be the cry of the Egyptians that rises up, and the Israelites will be silent.

