

This week's Audio, Video, and Teaching Notes are posted here.

The Pentateuch: A New Look – Confrontation – Part One – Class Fifteen (Who is the Pharaoh of the Exodus; Oppressive and Cruel Edicts – Forced Labor, Enslavement, and Infanticide; Birth of the Great Deliverer; An Unknown Pharaoh; Dating the Exodus; Names Associated with Titles; Semitic Slave Names; A Shortfall in Making Bricks; Thutmose III, The Elders of Israel Believe Moses and Aaron (Exodus 3) – Or Not (Exodus 6); A Partial Genealogy – Where is Miriam; The Ten Blows / Plagues (Exodus 10, Psalms 78, Psalms 105); Strikes Against the Gods and Pharaoh of Egypt; Maintaining Maat / Order; Moses and Aaron Battle with the Egyptian Khartoum / Magicians; Pharaoh's Heart was Hardened; Anubis and the Hall of the Tomb Maat)

**January 1, 2022 – Ross Nichols**

**Torah Portion: VaEra: “And I Appeared” – Exodus 6:2 – 9:35**

**Haftarah Reading: Ezekiel 28:25 – 29:21**

**Audio/Video Links:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBfvWxEjG58>

<https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/the-pentateuch-a-new-look-confrontation-part-one-class-fifteen/>

**Teaching Notes Link:**

<https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/1/2022.1.1-The-Pentateuch-A-New-Look-Confrontation-Part-One-Class-Fifteen.pdf>

**TODAY'S INTRODUCTION**

-Welcome to United Israel World Union, this is our Sabbath morning scripture study coming to you live from the United Israel Center in Saint Francisville, Louisiana. Thank you so much for joining us today. Many of you are in your own place today, alone, Shabbat Shalom and thank you for joining us this morning. We need one another to help us go through what the world is going through today. I pray that all of you and the ones that you care for remain healthy today and throughout the coronavirus.

-United Israel is pleased to announce a new teaching series for the Jewish calendar year 5782 (October 2021 – October 2022). The entire year will be dedicated to a careful study of the words of the Bible's first five books (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy) based upon an honest and objective new look at the Pentateuch. The materials for the weekly lessons will be arranged according to the annual cycle of readings that are followed in most Jewish Communities.

-We're going to talk about some of the theological motifs and some of the things that inspire and move us to connect with God and the spiritual aspects of these texts. We'll also talk about some of the historical, critical, scholarly, and academic approaches to the text to help understand how this book came together. These are the most remarkable stories in all of history. So, how did we get these books and what makes them up?

## TEACHING NOTES

-Today's class on The Pentateuch – A New Look is on Torah portion VaEra, (Exodus 6:2 – 9:35) which is translated as, "And I Appeared". This is the second reading in the annual Torah cycle of readings from the Book of Exodus, the Book of Names. Thank you for joining us today.

-Last week, I gave several examples of names that were somewhat striking. You have a book that's called the Book of Names, a reading that's designated "These are the Names", and you get a lot of people that you're introduced to, but you don't catch their names. We learn some of the names later, but at the time we're not introduced. We have several people in the opening chapters where the reader encounters a character, and we don't have a name for them. One example of the people that we meet for whom we have no name is the Pharaoh. Why is it that such an important detail is left out of the narrative? Who is the Pharaoh of the Exodus? You would think that someone writing the history would have reported the name. This would help us narrow down the window of time in which the Exodus takes place. This is the core of Biblical faith, and we don't even know who the Pharaoh.

-Last week we met this particular Pharaoh, but we didn't catch his name. All we know is that a new king rose over Egypt who didn't know Joseph. This newly risen ruler initiated several oppressive and cruel edicts taking positions that the historian of the Book of Exodus wants us to realize. These are new and are not something that was going on prior or they wouldn't be mentioned. Particularly against those of foreign birth who are living there. We are introduced to this idea that taskmasters are placed over the Hebrew people, the children of Israel. The language is very similar to that which we find in the Monarch period, particularly when we look at the history of Solomon and the oppressive edicts he placed over the Northern Tribes. The children of Israel are placed in forced labor, enslaved, and are forced to participate in massive building projects.

-This week I spent a lot of time looking at Egyptian texts from history and doing some study looking for things which correlate, whether they match the exact time or not, the biblical story of foreigners, particularly of Semitic origin in Egypt. These cruel and oppressive measures that were taken against the Hebrews were all meant to subject the Hebrew people to the rule of Pharaoh and to put them under that heel, and to curb the growth of the people. Pharaoh was concerned that the children of Israel would join up with the enemies of the Egyptians if they chose to attack. Yet the efforts failed despite the oppression and enslavement that Pharaoh put over the children of Israel, they multiplied even more.

-Next, in an attempt to curb this problem of the growth, the Pharaoh also puts out that you should kill, first to the midwives, two of them we know, Shiphrah and Puah, they feared God and they didn't follow through with the charge of the Pharaoh to kill these Hebrew boys. The command was then given to the people at large that anyone who knows of the birth of a Hebrew boy needs to oft the child and expose them to the Nile. This story sets the stage for the birth of the great deliverer, Moses. His name in Hebrew is tied to a Hebrew word that sounds like a word that means drawn from. The baby is drawn from the water and so he's called Drew, Drawn from, or "son of" in Egyptian. Ramses is from the same Egyptian root and means, born of Ra.

-We have an unnamed Pharaoh which is used by minimalist the world over to suggest that this is a problem and is that indicative of a text that is not truthful? Some have

suggested that the idea that we don't know the Pharaoh of the Exodus is that this was written so much later that the name had slipped. Some suggest the whole story is based on myth. Like Moses whose name means son of, then nothing, son of who, we don't know, we found him in the water. Should we expect to find the name of the Pharaoh in a text that dates to the period that concerns us? The following is a text that gives us an idea as to when the Exodus took place.

-1Kin 6: 1 In the four hundred and eightieth year after the people of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, he began to build the house of YHWH.

-Based on various chronologies the fourth year of Solomon's reign, generally dated at 968 BCE. If that year was the 480th year after Israel left Egypt, then that would date the Exodus at 1448 BCE. Generally, this is the date that is ascribed by people who want to be literal and stick with what we know from the bible and not entertain a lot of other ideas. There are vast differences in dating schemes and most scholars would put it 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century for the Exodus. We're talking a couple of hundred years later in 1448 BCE. This time of 1448 BCE into the 1500's corresponds to what we call the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty in Egypt. This time frame for the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty falls from 1550 BCE to 1295 BCE.

-We're going to take about a Pharaoh, and we don't know his name. I want to bring up a couple of points to give you some context. In Hebrew, Pharaoh sounds like Par-rough, and in Egyptian it sounds like, Par-rah. The Egyptian word from Old Kingdom texts (2686 BCE to 2160 BCE), this word Par-rah wasn't really used for an individual, like the King of Egypt. It was really used to signify the Great House or the Royal Palace. During the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty the word Par-rah becomes for the first time, according to the experts, associated with the Egyptian ruler. This fits our time of 1448 BCE and the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty in Egypt (1550 BCE to 1295 BCE).

-A name in text from this period is generally not associated with the title. It's only in this time that Par-rah becomes tied to a person, the king, the ruler and generally it's not tied to a name. Would we expect from the middle to late Bronze age, a document that purports to be written at that time to say, Pharaoh so and so? The answer to that is no. It fits that we have the word Par-rah, but we don't get the name attached to it. It doesn't mean that we don't have names for these people, but we do know that at this time it was not generally recorded, the name with the title. This practice continues into the Ramses period with follows the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. The Ramses period runs from 1295 BCE to about 1069 BCE. Don't expect to see Pharaoh so and so and or so and so King of Egypt, but we do see that at a later period. If we did see Pharaoh so and so, it might be suspect. When do we really start seeing a name associated with the title?

-Jer 46: 2 About Egypt. Concerning the army of Pharaoh Neco, king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates at Carchemish and which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah:

-Here we have a text during the time of Josiah where Pharaoh Neco is mentioned.

-1Kin 14: 25 In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem. 26 He took away the treasures of the house of YHWH and the treasures of the king's house. He took away everything. He also took away all the shields of gold that Solomon had made,

-Sort of early monarchy up until the close of the biblical period you see kings mentioned by name, associated with the title. But, in a text purporting to be when roughly we

believe the Exodus to be you're not necessarily expecting to see that. Let's look at a couple of other details as we begin to look at this contest. It's really a confrontation between Moses and Aaron and God and Pharaoh. We know in the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, Egypt has a professional Army, a good, standing, and strong Army.

-Between 1550 BCE to 1069 BCE, we have examples of foreigners being enslaved. We don't get a lot of that in other periods, but we do see it in the timeframe that we're concerned with. This is another piece to the puzzle, broad definitive pieces to put into the story. In some of these lists of names have been shown to be Semitic names. Sometimes you can look at these name lists from Egyptian documents from this period we're concerned with, and you see slave names and some of these are Semitic names. We also know that these slaves during this time, based on Egyptian records, were tasked with major building projects. They were utilized as slave labor to build these building projects for the Egyptians. We have texts from Egyptian records which demonstrate similarities between what we know historically and what we find in the biblical texts.

-A text called the "Louve", the Louve leather roll reports a shortfall in brick making quota. It's an Egyptian text written on leather and in this particular text dated later than I think the Exodus, but it still ties in with our biblical story, dates to about 1274 BCE. I think this is after the Exodus has already happened. In this record of the Louve leather roll, Paherypedjet son of Paser fails to deliver his quota of 2,000 bricks and he's in trouble.

-[http://cojs.org/leather\\_scroll-\\_quota\\_for\\_brick-making-\\_1274\\_bce/](http://cojs.org/leather_scroll-_quota_for_brick-making-_1274_bce/)

-Roughly, this is from the 5<sup>th</sup> year of Ramses II. This same Louve leather roll mentions that there are certain religious holidays that are allowed for these workers, like a union.

-There is this tomb painting on the wall of a tomb of Rekhmire and the painting shows people of a Semitic origin, and they are engaged in brick making. Rekhmire is from the time of a Pharaoh known as Thutmose III. This particular Pharaoh, according to most of the experts, is from 1479 BCE to 1425 BCE. Except that he assumes the position of Pharaoh young and there is an overlap where during his first 22 years he's coregent with his aunt / stepmother Hatshepsut and the last 2 years of his reign, one of his sons is coregent with him because his eldest son dies. The life of the Thutmose III falls into our period of 1448 BCE for the Exodus. Another view gives 1504 BCE to 1450 BCE for Thutmose III. We are only talking about a slight shift and there's a reason for it in Egyptian chronology. I want to continue to look closely and pull in all these other details. There's an Egyptian text known as Anastasi IV which records a complaint by an official about a lack of two things that are needed to make bricks, straw, and people, so the brick making doesn't go well.

-After God met Moses at Horeb and he tells Moses to go before Pharaoh, and he tells Moses that he's going to use him to free Israel from Egypt, we read this interesting story about Aaron leaving Egypt and Moses is at Horeb. Aaron leaves Egypt and goes to Horeb and finds Moses.

-Exo 4: 12 Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak." 13 But he said, "Oh, my Lord, please send someone else." 14 Then the anger of YHVH was kindled against Moses and he said, "Is there not Aaron, your brother, the Levite? I know that he can speak well. Behold, he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. 15 You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth, and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth and will teach you both

what to do. 16 He shall speak for you to the people, and he shall be your mouth, and you shall be as God to him.

-They are to act this out wherever they go, particularly to Pharaoh, where Moses is going to represent God and Aaron is going to be his prophet. He will serve as a spokesman for you, and you will be for a God for him. Moses is at Horeb, and Aaron is leaving Egypt and he's going to go meet Moses. How does he know exactly where to go?

-Exo 4: 27 YHVH said to Aaron, "Go into the wilderness to meet Moses." So he went and met him at the mountain of God and kissed him. 28 And Moses told Aaron all the words of YHVH with which he had sent him to speak, and all the signs that he had commanded him to do. 29 Then Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the people of Israel. 30 Aaron spoke all the words that YHVH had spoken to Moses and did the signs in the sight of the people. 31 And the people believed; and when they heard that YHVH had visited the people of Israel and that he had seen their affliction, they bowed their heads and worshiped.

-When they acted out the signs and the miracles, the people believed the message and they are happy. They're excited because now they get to be free.

-Exo 4: 1 Then Moses answered, "But behold, they will not believe me or listen to my voice, for they will say, YHVH did not appear to you."

-God is basically telling Moses, the point is, they're going to believe you, and according to Exodus 4:31 they do believe him. They seem to be excited about the fact that God's taken notice of them and in Exodus 5 Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh.

-Exo 5: 1 Afterward Moses and Aaron went and said to Pharaoh, "Thus says YHVH, the God of Israel, 'Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.'" 2 But Pharaoh said, "Who is YHVH, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know YHVH, and moreover, I will not let Israel go."

-Pharaoh doesn't know YHVH or heard of his name. He's probably heard a lot of different gods names. Pharaoh says, I don't know YHVH and I'm not letting you go. We've shown fairly well that we do have different sources that have come into the text that we now have as the biblical text. I want to compare Exodus 3 and Exodus 6. I will look at this at a high level and encourage you to do a more detailed look at this on your own this week.

Exodus 3	Exodus 6
6 And he said, " <u>I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.</u> " And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. (This is where God meets Moses for the first time.)	2 God spoke to Moses and said to him, " <u>I am the LORD.</u> 3 <u>I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob,</u> as God Almighty, but by my name YHVH I did not make myself known to them.
7 Then YHVH said, " <u>I have surely seen the affliction of my people</u> who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings,	5 Moreover, <u>I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel</u> whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant.
8 and <u>I have come down to deliver them</u> out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good	6 Say therefore to the people of Israel, 'I am YHVH, and <u>I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I</u>

and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.	<u>will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.</u> 7 I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am YHVH your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 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 YHVH."
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-In Exodus 6, when Moses tells this to the Israelites the people didn't listen. When they get this message in Exodus 3 and he tells them, they believe him. In Exodus 6, Moses tells a very similar story to the people, and they didn't listen. Why didn't they listen?

-Exo 6: 9 Moses spoke thus to the people of Israel, but they did not listen to Moses, because of their broken spirit and harsh slavery. 10 So YHVH said to Moses, 11 "Go in, tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the people of Israel go out of his land." 12 But Moses said to YHVH, "Behold, the people of Israel have not listened to me. How then shall Pharaoh listen to me, for I am of uncircumcised lips?" 13 But YHVH spoke to Moses and Aaron and gave them a charge about the people of Israel and about Pharaoh king of Egypt: to bring the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

-I want you to carefully this week study these two. They appear to be very similar in detail, worded differently, but similar pattern. God introduces himself to Moses by name referencing the fathers. God knows about the suffering of the children of Israel in Egypt. In one, go tell the people, he does. In both, Moses complains about not being to speak properly. In one, he's heavy of lip / tongue and in the other, he's of uncircumcised lips. In one, the people gladly hear his message and are happy and in the other, they don't believe him, and their spirit is crushed from hard bondage. I propose that this is an interesting example and you'll be reminded of other prophets that had to be convinced to go, Isaiah 6, and Jeremiah 1. In Exodus 6 we have a partial genealogy that's weird.

-Exo 6: 14 These are the heads of their fathers' houses: the sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi; these are the clans of Reuben. 15 The sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman; these are the clans of Simeon. 16 These are the names of the sons of Levi according to their generations: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, the years of the life of Levi being 137 years. 17 The sons of Gershon: Libni and Shimei, by their clans. 18 The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, the years of the life of Kohath being 133 years. 19 The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. These are the clans of the Levites according to their generations. 20 Amram took as his wife Jochebed his father's sister, and she bore him Aaron and Moses, the years of the life of Amram being 137 years. 21 The sons of Izhar: Korah, Nepheg, and Zichri. 22 The sons of Uzziel: Mishaël, Elzaphan, and Sithri. 23 Aaron took as his wife Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab and the sister of Nahshon, and she bore him Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. 24 The sons of Korah: Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph; these are the clans of the Korahites. 25 Eleazar,

Aaron's son, took as his wife one of the daughters of Putiel, and she bore him Phinehas. These are the heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites by their clans.

-We believe that the writer is pulling this from another list, and they're only interested in getting us to Moses and Aaron. This is the first time that we learn the father and mother of Moses which we didn't get at the beginning of Exodus.

-Exo 6: 20 Amram took as his wife Jochebed his father's sister, and she bore him Aaron and Moses, the years of the life of Amram being 137 years.

-Where is Miriam? Other women are mentioned in this list, so why isn't Miriam listed? We are now coming to the place where we're dealing with the great confrontation, and all of this is just background which will extend into next week's class. We are going to work through what are called the plagues. Are these miracles, natural phenomena, and did they even happen. There are different views put forward on this. Some have said it's just a story and it never happened. Deuteronomy doesn't mention them and that's ok, it doesn't mean that they didn't happen. If we're talking about these particular plagues, how many were there?

-If you read Exodus, there are in fact ten plagues that go from the beginning of Exodus 7 to Exodus 12:36. (1) Water to blood; (2) Frogs; (3) Lice / Gnats; (4) Swarms; (5) Pestilence; (6) Boils; (7) Hail and fire; (8) Locus; (9) Darkness; and (10) The Plague of the firstborn.

-If you go to Psalms 78, poetic, a Psalm of Asaph, it gives a different list in a different order. Make another chart comparing Exodus 10, Psalms 78, and Psalms 105. Here is the order and number according to Psalms 78: (1) Water to blood; (2) Swarms / Insects; (3) Frogs; (4) Swarms; (5) Locus; (6) Hail; (7) Hail and death of a lot of beasts; and (8) The Plague of the firstborn.

-If you go to Psalms 105, it gives a different list in a different order. There are a lot of similarities between these lists. I want you to look at them because these are ancient records of the ten plagues. What we are studying right now is the historicity and the ancient memories that the Biblical writers gave us. Asaph wanted us to know his list. Here is the order and number according to Psalms 105: (1) Darkness; (2) Water to blood and the fish die; (3) Frogs; (4) Swarms / insects; (5) Hail-fire; (6) Locus; and (7) The Plague of the firstborn.

-A lot of people have said that the plagues are strikes against Egypt's gods and it's a pretty good theory. You can find correlations between some of these plagues and what they represent and how they're tied to these Egyptian gods, but it's only partial agreement and the idea is that there is some agreement between the two. Hoffmeier puts his theory forward that the plagues are aimed at Pharaoh. You have to knock Pharaoh on his backside in front of the people and that's what God is doing with the plagues.

-One of the things that the king of Egypt, even in Old Kingdom text (2686 BCE to 2160 BCE), the king / Pharaoh is responsible to maintain maat / order. Maat deals with order on a cosmic scale, and on a social scale too. By God doing these particular events, the people would view these things as no maat / order. In ancient Egyptian reliefs it shows the king presenting the goddess named Maat, representing this idea of social and cosmic order, maat to the chief deity of the pantheon, Amon Ra, here's maat (cosmic and social order). The king is promising to the people, I'm going to fix this and I'm to fix that. Whoever it is, it's the same story. Everyone knew that as long as cosmic catastrophe or basic order was maintained that the Pharaoh had kept his promises, and everything is

going lovely, maat is stored up and the king will take credit for that. However, if bad things are going on, Pharaoh gets the credit, not the king.

-In Exodus 7, as these blows begin, like one right after another, we're reminded of what we read in Exodus 4, where Moses is put for God to Pharaoh and Aaron is your prophet. When they go in there the showdown, the confrontation is between the team of Moses and Aaron and YHVH verses Egypt, particularly Pharaoh and we have these battles that take place. In the beginning of Exodus 7, we throw our staffs down and they become serpents and they do the same thing, then the serpent of the Israelite side eats the serpents of the Egyptian side. In Exodus 4 Moses staff clearly turns into a serpent, but here the Hebrew word is different and generally means a dragon or a crocodile. Did his staff turn into a snake or a crocodile? Much later in Ezekiel 29:3, Pharaoh is referred to as a crocodile. What this signifies is that there is a bigger crocodile. You think you are God. You think you're the top dog, but here's Moses and Aaron and our God's bigger, stronger, and so forth.

-These Egyptian magicians are called Khartoum and were brought into Pharaoh to interpret his dreams with Joseph and couldn't, Genesis 41:8. These same Egyptian magicians are also found in Daniel 1:20 & 2:2. These Egyptian magicians are highly educated and mentioned in ancient Egyptian writings and are associated with the House of Life and attached to the temple cult. They are mainly responsible for ritual, magic, and the passing on of these ritualistic things. They also do medicine, astronomy etc, and generally in the text, they seem to be presented as men. Everybody is scared of them and believe that if you get on their bad side, they can put a hex or a curse on you.

-One point I want to use to set the stage for next week's class because even though we get six of the blows / plagues this week, I don't want to split that up and talk more about that next week. I do want to set one thing up for us because a lot of people talk about the heart of Pharaoh. God hardens his heart so what chance did he have and is that fair to Pharaoh? There is a lot riding on Pharaoh's heart in this particular story from Exodus 7 through Exodus 12. Sometimes his heart is called hard and sometimes his heart is called strong and at other times you have to question whether Pharaoh is making his own heart hard. Several times in the text we read that Pharaoh strengthened or hardened his own heart and he becomes resolved.

-Exo 7: 13 Still Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as YHVH had said. 14 Then YHVH said to Moses, "Pharaoh's heart is hardened; he refuses to let the people go.

-Exo 7: 22 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 YHVH had said.

-Exo 8: 15 But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart and would not listen to them, as YHVH had said.

-Exo 8: 19 Then 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 YHVH had said.

-Exo 8: 31 And YHVH did as Moses asked, and removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people; not one remained. 32 But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and did not let the people go.

-Exo 9: 7 And Pharaoh sent, and behold, not one of the livestock of Israel was dead. But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.



-Exo 9: 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, just as YHVH had spoken through Moses.

-All of these deal with Pharaoh hardening / strengthening his own heart, God's not doing this yet.

-Exo 10: 1 Then YHVH 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,

-Pharaoh strengthens his resolve. In ancient Egyptian sources, we see this idea of a heavy heart and in interesting ways it's presented. One depiction is the Egyptian god Anubis escorting a dead person through the hall of the tomb Maat and in the depiction the person's heart is on a scale. What's the heart of this dead person being weighed against? Maat, and do you know what Maat is represented as, a feather. If Anubis brings you in, your heart is weighed in the scale verses the feather of Maat. Do you know what that means? It means you better walk a tight line in your life because if your heart is heavy with sin, it drops down and a monster eats you. That's the idea of the afterlife and it's part of the Book of the Dead.

-Next week we'll talk about these plagues, these blows, and we'll go blow by blow through this particular story. I want you to know that Egyptian records provide insight into the biblical accounts and confirm many of the details that we find written in the text. Still yet and thankfully so, due to differing accounts that are preserved within the biblical text as we have received it, we know that these different sources are used. We see that in the text, we compare things and notice. It's not our job to conflate stories or to make these meld into one or to consider ourselves champions of some noble cause by defending things which clearly are from separate sources.

-I want to look at all of this careful next week where we'll continue with the confrontation between Moses and Aaron and God on one side and is now known and will forever be hereafter, known as YHVH. But this God who was not known to Pharaoh, perhaps wasn't known to the patriarchs either, is going in next week's class to make a name for himself. A name, that is his eternal name, throughout all generations from Horeb forward. Join me next week.

Shabbat Shalom, Shavua Tov, welcome to 2022.

## **THIS WEEK IN TORAH**

JANUARY 1, 2022

This week's Torah Portion VaEra: "And I Appeared" (Exodus 6:2 – 9:35) God reassures Moses; God promises deliverance; The four expressions of redemption; Moses demurs; The mission and its bearers; Second demurrer; The genealogy of Moses and Aaron; Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh; The redemption begins; The first plague/blood; The second plague/frogs; The third plague/gnats; The fourth plague/fly; The fifth plague/livestock die; The sixth plague/boils; The seventh plague/hail.

"Shavua Tov" and Have a Great Week!

"This Week in Torah" FB Page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/571648826269105/>

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

-Blossoming Rose Israel Tours (2022): <https://blossomingrose.org/>  
-Walking the Ancient Paths – (2022): Tabor – Nichols Israel Tour March 4-15, 2022;  
<https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/israel-tours/>; <https://blossomingrose.org/2022-walking-the-ancient-paths/>  
-UNCC Mt. Zion Archaeological Project, Dig Mt. Zion (2022): June/July 2022;  
<https://digmountzion.uncc.edu/>, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/digmountzion/>  
-Accessible Adventure Israel Tour – (2022): Nichols – Young; October 17 – 27, 2022;  
<https://blossomingrose.org/accessible-adventure-israel-tour-2022/>  
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