

WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?; MOSES & PHARAOH, Ex7-11

The Formidable Unforgotten #4

♦**Intro:** "The local Peruvians informed us that a strike was being organized by those who serve the nation's department of local transportation, and it might take place on the day our mission project was scheduled to begin. At best a strike would limit our work. Worse, it could put our team in danger. We would have to walk a mile to the mission site with potential threats lurking around every corner. Having heard the discouraging news, the men on the mission team decided to walk the streets of Huancayo and ask God for a miracle.

♦We walked, we prayed, and then we waited. The next day, the strike did indeed take place across the entire country of Peru—*everywhere except in Huancayo*. God demonstrated his power in a miraculous, mysterious way. There was no other explanation except for the power of prayer. I couldn't help but remember the story of how the Lord protected his people from one of the plagues sent on the Egyptians. In Exodus 10:20-23, God draped a thick blanket of darkness over all the land of Egypt but shielded his people with light so they could move about freely. Thousands of years later, he made a way for a small missions team to move through Huancayo even though the transportation strike restricted everyone else in the country. I'll never forget the miracle in Peru. It's another clear and constant reminder that God works in amazing, unexpected ways all over the world.

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The Formidable Unforgotten #4

♦Have you ever wondered why God does miraculous things? Have you ever wondered why God put Egypt through the paces with the 10 plagues? I mean, they really weren't necessary, were they? If God merely wanted to secure the release of the Hebrew people from the land of Egypt, clearly he could have done so without much difficulty. Anyone who can turn all the water to blood, or send a plague of locusts at will could accomplish whatever he wants. Yet he interacts with Pharaoh through Moses ten times!

♦**1. The message of the 10 plagues is simple really: It is this: God is King, not me.** Take a look.

♦"Then the LORD said to Moses, "Get up early in the morning, confront Pharaoh and say to him, 'This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me, or *this time I will send the full force of my plagues against you and against your officials and your people, so you may know that there is no-one like me in all the earth.* For by now I could have stretched out my hand and struck you and your people with a plague that would have wiped you off the earth. But I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.'" Exodus 9:13-16, NIV.

♦A. Do you see what's happening? In the plagues, God is introducing himself to the world.

WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?; MOSES & PHARAOH, Ex7-11

The Formidable Unforgotten #4

♦1) God wanted the Egyptian people to come to the understanding that he was not just some Hebrew religious notion.

♦“And the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring the Israelites out of it.” Exodus 7:5, NIV.

♦2) God specifically wanted Pharaoh to understand that he was not the big cheese he thought he was. He was not the real “king”. God is King.

♦“So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him, “This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: ‘How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go, so that they may worship me.’” Exodus 10:3, NIV.

♦3) God wanted the Israelites to become acquainted with him as their real father.

♦“I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians.” Exodus 6:7, NIV. (cf 10:2)

♦4) God wanted the nations to know that the God of the Hebrew people is the only true God.

♦“Moses told his father-in-law about everything the LORD had done to Pharaoh and the Egyptians for Israel’s sake and about all the hardships they had met

WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?; MOSES & PHARAOH, Ex7-11

The Formidable Unforgotten #4

along the way and how the LORD had saved them.

Jethro was delighted to hear about all the good things the LORD had done for Israel in rescuing them from the hand of the Egyptians. He said, "Praise be to the LORD, who rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians and of Pharaoh, and who rescued the people from the hand of the Egyptians. Now I know that the LORD is greater than all other gods..." Exodus 18:8-11, NIV.

♦And so do you think God wants you to know who he is as well? We are in a plague too, aren't we? (Acts17:24f). There is a God-King that rules over all. He rules "mother nature", economy, nations and princes, presidents and senators. He rules the Marxist, the socialist and the capitalist's worlds. None of these establish the life and hope of man. Nor do you establish yours. Humble yourself before God, and he will lift up your life.

♦**2.** In addition to introducing himself on a international scale, the **Ten Plagues also tell us that God is king of every discipline, study, topic, or territory.**

♦In Exodus 7-11 God is also laying out the reaches of his territory. I don't need to tell you that it includes, well, absolutely everything, no exceptions. The people of Pharaoh's day believed that there were many gods, each with their own territory. But God is sending a news bulletin saying, "*Um, No. There are not lots of equally true gods. There are not lots of equally valid religions. All roads do not lead to the same place. Truth is not*

WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?; MOSES & PHARAOH, Ex7-11

The Formidable Unforgotten #4

relative to what you're into. One faith is not pretty much the same as another. I'm it."

♦Consider each of the plagues:



♦**Nile**: Did you want your Egyptian farm in the countryside to prosper? Then you prayed to H'api, the goddess of the Nile. So Moses' God kills the Nile River; he turns it to blood. What was thought to be supernatural was shown to be dead.



♦**Frogs**: Did you want your wife to do well in childbirth? Well then you worshiped the goddess of fertility, Heqet, who took the shape of the frog. So what was thought to be supernatural became a nuisance in a plague of frogs, at the mere word of God. Nothing like a pair of frog legs getting caught in your egg-beater!



♦**Cattle**: Egyptians worshiped Hathor, a god of the sky depicted as a cow, whose milk was said to nourish Pharaoh. A sandstone statue of Pharaoh Amenhotep II, bowing beneath a cow was unearthed in 1906. So God sent a plague causing the livestock to die.



♦**Darkness**: The Egyptians worship Re, the Sun God, so the true God sent darkness over the land.



♦**Lice**: Geb was the god of the earth, so God turns the dust to lice.



♦**Hail**: Nut was the goddess of the sky, so God takes control of the sky and sends hail.

♦**Boils**: Isis was the goddess mother of healing, so God

WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?; MOSES & PHARAOH, Ex7-11

The Formidable Unforgotten #4

sends boils that prayers to Isis don't affect.

♦Do you see what God is doing? One by one he's taking all their god's and showing them to be false, that they can't deliver. That he reigns in all of their territories. The account of the Ten Plagues is the picture of two kings (God and Pharaoh) fighting over who owns the Israelites, and everything else. And in the words of Cool Hand Luke, "What we have here is a failure to communicate."

♦Abraham Kuyper is famous for saying "There is no square inch of the earth over which God does not say, "This is mine.""

♦The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; Psalms 24:1 NIV.

♦"The heavens are yours, and yours also the earth; you founded the world and all that is in it." Psalms 89:11, NIV.

♦"*Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendour, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all.*" 1 Chronicles 29:11, NIV.

♦C. Shall we venture an applying of this truth to ourselves?

♦1) In America we say we allow freedom of religion. That no one can force a faith upon you, and that you may worship as you choose. But many then make the illogical, and ungodly conclusion that all religions are true. What happens then? Christians, followers of the true God, fail to speak of the Truth, or Jesus, of his death as the only way to

WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?; MOSES & PHARAOH, Ex7-11

The Formidable Unforgotten #4

forgiveness of sin, and eternal life. Parents fail to teach their children anything about God so that they can choose on their own, another illogical and dangerous approach.

Find the truth and share it with everyone you care about! In our love affair with equality, we have married neutrality.
And in our neutrality we have lost passion for the truth, and compassion for those without it. [Applying this to our political unrest in the USA today: Stop being "comfortably numb" (to quote the prophet Pink Floyd). God owns nations, politics, economy. Speak up. Argue, fight -with kindness and charity of course. But if you know the true God, worship him with your witness in society.

♦2) What are your gods? She goes to the coast with a couple of girl friends. A girl's vacation away. But each night she brings back to the cabin a man. A different man each time. These aren't GQ models. Her friends are getting a bad taste in their mouths. What's she thinking? What's she doing? Still, as the days go by, it appears that even after the physical satisfaction of the night before, her god does not deliver her. What are your gods?

♦He sits behind a computer screen. Some days the programming is a challenge he relishes. He marvels at the mathematics behind the language he enters. How a byte of digital data can end up yielding a pixel of color in a high resolution photograph of some exotic place, now on your

WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?; MOSES & PHARAOH, Ex7-11

The Formidable Unforgotten #4

desktop. But other days he thinks over the timeline of his life. Twenty years he's been doing this. Maybe 20 more to go, giving maybe 80% of his life's energy, to what? His god hasn't filled him up either. What is your god?

♦They have a comfortable home. Two well-adjusted, almost grown children. They've each had 2-3 different jobs down through the years while trying to raise the family. Most nights they come home, eat a simple microwavable meal and plop down in front of the TV to watch images of beautiful people doing hideous things in exotic places. They watch the stars dance and the idols sing and the weather reports, giving the jet stream more time and devotion than any spiritual pursuit. They do this mostly without smiling and then head to bed, sometimes thinking "There must be something more." Is their god your god?

♦Your gods are whatever you go to when "the dog bites, the bee stings, and you're feeling sad." Don't turn to other gods! You might try them. You might feel good for a few moments, but they never deliver from your slavery. Recognize the true God, the Almighty Creator. Bow before his will and command. If you want a soul that can weather the pains of earth, you need the real God. Your false gods will not deliver you. But He will.

♦**Conclusion:** And this is where we tie it all up. What do we know about the True King, the one who reigns over every nation or topic, or bit of information? We know this: God is the rescuer

WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?; MOSES & PHARAOH, Ex7-11

The Formidable Unforgotten #4

of his people. The Ten Plagues introducing God, show his love and protection for all you turn to him. God makes a distinction between his and others. Take a look:

- ◆ Flies: 8:22 *no swarms in Goshen*
- ◆ Livestock: 9:4 *no animal belonging to Israel*
- ◆ Boils: 9:11 *on the Egyptians*
- ◆ Hail: 9:26 *no hail in Goshen*
- ◆ Locusts: 10:6 *locusts on the Egyptians*
- ◆ Darkness: 10:23 *Israel had light*
- ◆ First Born: 11:7 *no harm at all to Israel.* The Hebrews who listened were passed over (ch12) by the Angel of Death, and they found the Exodus, the “road out” of slavery.
- ◆ If you want rescue, or protection, hope or, love or real life, worship/love Jesus, who made us an exodus from sin and guilt. Do not make yourself, or other things into gods, noteworthy as they might be. You are not Pharaoh! But follow any element of creation beauty toward the true God, as a sunbeam causes you to notice the Sun.

WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?; MOSES & PHARAOH, Ex7-11

The Formidable Unforgotten #4

Note about song, Waymaker: (keep the LS in your hand.)

Do you know what **exodus** means? A way (odos) out (ex). God has made a way out of slavery for you. A way out of **darkness**, just as Israel had light during the plague of darkness on Egypt.

Jesus is that exodus. And why did God bring them out? To **worship** and know him. So in this song, do that. Sit, stand dance, kneel, bow. -but worship and pray this song. Forget everything else around you.