

Exodus 6-7

SLIDE 6/7-1

- Moses has experienced his first confrontation with Pharaoh, and the result was greater misery and hardship for Israel
 - God's purpose in the encounter was to steel Moses and Aaron for what follows
 - This won't be easy, it will be complicated, but it will come to pass as God has promised
 - Meanwhile, it also caused the Israelites to grumble against Moses and his leadership
 - That too was training for Moses, because there is a lot more of that grumbling coming
- Now we see God roll up His sleeves and begin the work of freeing Israel
 - But first, God wants Moses to understand the privilege it is for Moses to see God working in this way

Ex. 6:1 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for under compulsion he will let them go, and under compulsion he will drive them out of his land."

Ex. 6:2 God spoke further to Moses and said to him, "I am the LORD;

Ex. 6:3 and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name, LORD, I did not make Myself known to them.

Ex. 6:4 "I also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they sojourned.

Ex. 6:5 "Furthermore I have heard the groaning of the sons of Israel, because the Egyptians are holding them in bondage, and I have remembered My covenant.

Ex. 6:6 "Say, therefore, to the sons 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. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.

Ex. 6:7 'Then 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 brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

Ex. 6:8 'I will bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you for a possession; I am the LORD.'"

Ex. 6:9 So Moses spoke thus to the sons of Israel, but they did not listen to Moses on account of their despondency and cruel bondage.

- The Lord announces to Moses that He will cause Moses to set Israel free from the land

- In fact, Pharaoh will actually drive Israel out of the land
 - He will do so out of compulsion
 - The Lord will create the motivation for Pharaoh to do this
 - But as we noted last week, the Lord will ensure that Pharaoh hesitates until the last judgment is finished
 - It's as if Pharaoh is a rubber band the Lord wants to stretch to the furthest extent possible before releasing the tension
 - And with that release, Israel is launched out of the land
- In vs.6-8 comes an important set of verses theologically
 - In v.2 God repeats His name to Moses
 - He says I am Who I am (*hayah*)
 - Or as we have it translated, Lord or Jehovah
 - God gives Moses His personal name, which God chose to associate with His work to free Israel
- When God appeared to Moses to announce the plan to free Israel, God told Moses to declare that the God, I AM, has come to keep His promise to Israel
 - Forevermore, the God Jehovah will be known as a covenant keeping God
 - God wants His personal name to identify God as a covenant keeper
 - But God tells Moses that He did not make Himself known to the patriarchs in the same way that He is now prepared to reveal Himself to Moses and Israel
 - When God says He didn't make Himself known to the patriarchs as Jehovah, He doesn't mean that the patriarchs didn't know that name
 - On the contrary, they did know His personal name
 - We can find times in Genesis where the patriarchs use the name Jehovah as they speak to God
 - God meant that the patriarchs didn't experience the Lord in the same way Moses and Israel will now know Him

- In the time of the patriarchs, God was known as a covenant-making God, El Shaddai, God Almighty
 - That name implied God was capable of doing what He promised
 - In v.4 the Lord reminds Moses that He also established His covenant with the patriarchs, just as God has made promises to Moses
 - Those promises stipulated that God would bring Israel into the land of Canaan after a period of slavery
 - But the patriarchs never saw these promises fulfilled
 - They knew God as a promise making God, but they never had the opportunity to know Him as a promise-keeping God
 - They knew God in a limited way in the sense that they couldn't see the promises kept
 - Ultimately, the patriarchs will all experience God's faithfulness fully in the Kingdom, when all God's promises are fully met
- Then God brings Moses the fullest understanding of God's plan for His people
 - In vs.6-8 God delivers seven "I will's" to Moses
 - Taken together, these seven statements declare God's full program for Israel in the Exodus
 - First, God will redeem Israel out of Egypt and out of bondage with great judgments
 - Second, God will make Israel a people for Himself
 - Third, God will bring them into the land He promised them
 - These statements are the fulfillment of God's promises and a demonstration of His covenant keeping character
 - But these statements have much greater, farther reaching consequences than merely the Exodus story
 - They are prophetic of a later period of promise keeping
 - Each of these I WILLs are lessor examples of a much greater redemption God will work for the sake of Israel in a future day

- First, God will redeem Israel out of Egypt
 - Egypt in scripture is a common symbol for the Gentile world
- Then God will remove Israel from bondage
 - Physical bondage is commonly a picture in Scripture for spiritual bondage
 - Paul says we are either a slave to sin or a slave to Christ
 - Israel's physical bondage in Egypt becomes a picture, therefore, of Israel's spiritual bondage to sin
- Third, God will deliver Israel into the land He promised them
 - This land will be the inheritance God gave Israel
 - But the writer of Hebrews tells us that the rest Israel entered under Joshua wasn't the ultimate fulfillment of God's promised rest
 - So there remains a future day when Israel's rest will be fully realized in a greater sense and a greater place
- Finally, all of this will happen in concert with great judgments
 - Taken together these statements are speaking of the day God brings a glorified Israel into the Kingdom
 - Ezekiel describes that day

[Ezek. 36:22](#) "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went.

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[Ezek. 36:23](#) "I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD," declares the Lord GOD, "when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight.

[Ezek. 36:24](#) "For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land.

[Ezek. 36:25](#) "Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.

[Ezek. 36:26](#) "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

[Ezek. 36:27](#) "I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

[Ezek. 36:28](#) "You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God.

- First, God will regather Israel out of the nations of the world
 - And He will bring them into the Land
 - Once there, God will give the nation of Israel a new heart, sprinkled clean by the Spirit
 - And by this new heart, the nation will become fully obedient to the Law of God...glorified, in other words
- Clearly, these events are in our future, and they represent a much greater fulfillment of the things God is doing here in Exodus
 - In fact, the Exodus story was orchestrated by God precisely for the purpose of creating this foreshadowing

[Ezek. 20:33](#) "As I live," declares the Lord GOD, "surely with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out, I shall be king over you.

[Ezek. 20:34](#) "I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out;

[Ezek. 20:35](#) and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face.

[Ezek. 20:36](#) "As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you," declares the Lord GOD.

[Ezek. 20:37](#) "I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant;

[Ezek. 20:38](#) and I will purge from you the rebels and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they will not enter the land of Israel. Thus you will know that I am the LORD.

- Notice the similarity in the language between the promise to redeem Israel in Exodus and the promise to perform a greater redemption in the future?
 - We are watching the picture God created in the lives of Moses and Israel to foreshadow an even greater delivery still to come
 - And the great judgments of the Exodus are foreshadows of the judgments of Tribulation

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- In both cases, the judgments precede the release of Israel from bondage and their worship of God at a mountain
- In the case of Exodus, the mountain is Horeb and they worship in the context of Law
- In the second, greater example, the mountain is Zion in the Kingdom and the worship will be in the context of grace
- In v.7 God finishes the I WILLs declaring that Israel will be His people and the whole nation will know Him
 - This too is a prophetic reference to a future deliverance

[Jer. 31:31](#) "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, [Jer. 31:32](#) not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD.

[Jer. 31:33](#) "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

[Jer. 31:34](#) "They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

SLIDE 6/7-4

- In these opening verses of Chapter 6, God is telling Moses that you are about to see something your ancestors never experienced
 - You will know a God of power and faithfulness delivering on His promises
 - But even then, Moses is only seeing a part of that faithfulness
 - There will be an even greater display of God's faithfulness to Israel in the future made known in Christ
 - As church saints, we have already received that greater revelation of God's faithfulness
 - By our own faith and the indwelling of the Spirit, we have proof in our own life of God as a promises-keeping God

- Yet we too have even more to see in a future day when Christ comes for us
- This is why the writer of Hebrews can say:

Heb. 1:1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,

Heb. 1:2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

- We have gained far more than Moses ever knew, even having seen the miracles
- The Bible tells us that our present experience is a greater revelation than anything God gave those who came before us
- If offered the chance, the Old Testament saints would have traded what they received for the chance to know the Messiah in the way we do
- Finally, Moses tells all this to Israel, in v.9
 - But naturally, they don't listen to him
 - They are so despondent as a result of their circumstances, they can't consider these important issues
 - Who could blame them at this point
- Now God repeats His previous instructions to Moses

Ex. 6:10 Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

Ex. 6:11 "Go, tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the sons of Israel go out of his land."

Ex. 6:12 But Moses spoke before the LORD, saying, "Behold, the sons of Israel have not listened to me; how then will Pharaoh listen to me, for I am unskilled in speech?"

Ex. 6:13 Then the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, and gave them a charge to the sons of Israel and to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

- Moses once again starts to doubt his abilities to accomplish the task facing him
 - He is back to assuming the success of this mission depends on him
 - Moses complains that if the Israelites haven't listened to him, how would he expect to influence Pharaoh
 - In v.12 Moses uses a graphic description to explain his weakness

- My English version says “I am unskilled in speech”
 - But in Hebrew it literally says I am a man of uncircumcised lips
 - He literally means he speaks as if he has a layer of skin enclosed over his mouth
 - I watched the movie pretty closely, and I’m pretty sure Charlton Heston’s make-up artist overlooked that detail
- From the sound of it, Moses is simply incapable of performing this task
 - But God will still succeed, because God has chosen to work through Moses and Aaron
 - And this leads Moses to provide his own genealogy
 - The timing of the genealogy is important
 - At the point where God is preparing to begin His work of judgment in Egypt, Moses establishes he and Aaron are men called by God

[Ex. 6:14](#) These are the heads of their fathers’ households. The sons of Reuben, Israel’s firstborn: Hanoch and Pallu, Hezron and Carmi; these are the families of Reuben.

[Ex. 6:15](#) The sons of Simeon: Jemuel and Jamin and Ohad and Jachin and Zohar and Shaul the son of a Canaanite woman; these are the families of Simeon.

[Ex. 6:16](#) These are the names of the sons of Levi according to their generations: Gershon and Kohath and Merari; and the length of Levi’s life was one hundred and thirty-seven years.

[Ex. 6:17](#) The sons of Gershon: Libni and Shimei, according to their families.

[Ex. 6:18](#) The sons of Kohath: Amram and Izhar and Hebron and Uzziel; and the length of Kohath’s life was one hundred and thirty-three years.

[Ex. 6:19](#) The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. These are the families of the Levites according to their generations.

[Ex. 6:20](#) Amram married his father’s sister Jochebed, and she bore him Aaron and Moses; and the length of Amram’s life was one hundred and thirty-seven years.

[Ex. 6:21](#) The sons of Izhar: Korah and Nepheg and Zichri.

[Ex. 6:22](#) The sons of Uzziel: Mishael and Elzaphan and Sithri.

[Ex. 6:23](#) Aaron married Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab, the sister of Nahshon, and she bore him Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.

[Ex. 6:24](#) The sons of Korah: Assir and Elkanah and Abiasaph; these are the families of the Korahites.

Ex. 6:25 Aaron's son Eleazar married one of the daughters of Putiel, and she bore him Phinehas. These are the heads of the fathers' households of the Levites according to their families.

Ex. 6:26 It was the same Aaron and Moses to whom the LORD said, "Bring out the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt according to their hosts."

Ex. 6:27 They were the ones who spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt about bringing out the sons of Israel from Egypt; it was the same Moses and Aaron.

- We can make a few observations concerning this genealogy, beginning with the final verse
 - Moses says his purpose in giving this record was to establish conclusively for Israel that Aaron and Moses had authority and standing to act as God's representative
 - They were Jews who descended from the families that came to Egypt with Jacob
 - As such, they were eligible to share in the promises of God
 - And in centuries to come, the names Moses and Aaron would be uniquely associated with this event and this call
 - Though Israel wouldn't listen to Moses in his own day, nevertheless Scripture properly records that Moses and Aaron were the legitimate representatives chosen by God
- Moses begins the genealogy where his last genealogy of Genesis ended, the line of Jacob's sons
 - Among the sons of Jacob, Moses traces the first four only
 - He is connecting the dots to Levi, and once he reaches Levi, he stops
 - Now Moses moves down the family tree toward himself
- Now in Chapter 7, God answers Moses' concerns once again

Ex. 7:1 Then the LORD said to Moses, "See, I make you as God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet.

Ex. 7:2 "You shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall speak to Pharaoh that he let the sons of Israel go out of his land.

Ex. 7:3 "But I will harden Pharaoh's heart that I may multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt.

[Ex. 7:4](#) “When Pharaoh does not listen to you, then I will lay My hand on Egypt and bring out My hosts, My people the sons of Israel, from the land of Egypt by great judgments.

[Ex. 7:5](#) “The Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch out My hand on Egypt and bring out the sons of Israel from their midst.”

[Ex. 7:6](#) So Moses and Aaron did it; as the LORD commanded them, thus they did.

[Ex. 7:7](#) Moses was eighty years old and Aaron eighty-three, when they spoke to Pharaoh.

- As He has said before, God reminds Moses that Moses does not need to speak (at least not much)
 - God will deliver instructions to Moses, but not to Aaron
 - Then as Moses retransmits those instructions to Aaron, Moses acts in the place of God for Aaron
 - That’s the meaning of the phrase “I make you as if God”
 - Then Aaron will act as Moses’ (and God’s) prophet to Pharaoh
 - In this way, Moses says everything God says, and Aaron says everything that Moses says
 - This little arrangement saves Moses from having to speak, since this is a weakness for Moses
 - We’ve heard this plan before, but each time it’s repeated, it’s still fascinating
 - Wouldn’t it have been simpler to work through Aaron alone?
 - Why the two-step process of representation?
 - I believe God is establishing a pattern for Israel that begins here and continues throughout their existence
 - God will raise up leaders in Israel and prophets
 - Leaders will be elders, judges and kings
 - But these men will be distinct from prophets, who come bearing the words of God
 - Until this point, God had never established either role
 - This marks a transition from patriarchal rule (or the dispensation of patriarchs) to the dispensation of Law

- In the new period of God's economy, men will receive God's word as instructions for living and serving Him
- And other men will rule over Israel according to that word
 - Here we see the beginnings of that pattern
- God also reminds Moses that Pharaoh's heart will be hardened against his words
 - Notice again the source of the hardening: God Himself
 - In the early stages of the confrontation, Pharaoh won't need God's hardening, because Pharaoh himself is predisposed to reject Moses' request
 - But when the plagues begin to wear down Pharaoh's resolve (at about plague 5), God steps in to harden Pharaoh's heart further
 - This will ensure Pharaoh continues to say no to Moses until the very end of the plagues
 - The effect of God's plan is to magnify His glory in the end
 - In v.5 God declares that in this way, all Egypt will know the living God
 - They will know this truth not only because Israel is set free but also because of the judgments themselves
 - It's important to note that Egypt is not going to believe in the word of the Lord so as to be saved
 - God is simply saying that they will recognize the truth of God but without saving faith as a result
 - Similar to the way James says that demons can know about God

James 2:19 You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.

- The Egyptians will be forced to acknowledge that the God of Israel is the true God
- But this acknowledgement is not the same thing as saving faith
- God's intent is that every tongue will confess and every knee shall bow at the name of Jesus

- But that moment doesn't produce universal salvation
 - Only those who make that acknowledgement on the basis of faith in this life will receive His mercy
- This section provides yet another shadow of the end times deliverance of Israel
 - If you have studied through our Revelation study, then this connection will be easy to see
 - Once again, Egypt represents the world that experiences God's wrath in Tribulation
 - And in the last day of Tribulation, as God brings the judgments of Tribulation to conclusion, the world will acknowledge God
 - But they will fail to believe so as to be saved

[Rev. 9:20](#) The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk;
[Rev. 9:21](#) and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts.

- Lastly, we're given the ages of Moses and Aaron at the time the plagues begin
 - Moses was 80 and Aaron was his older brother at 83
 - Scripture gives ages to help us track the passage of events accurately
 - And it notes significant moments in a person's life, as when a child is born
- Now it's time for Moses to confront Pharaoh and display one of the miracles God gave to Moses, the miracle of the staff becoming a snake

[Ex. 7:8](#) Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying,

[Ex. 7:9](#) "When Pharaoh speaks to you, saying, 'Work a miracle,' then you shall say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and throw it down before Pharaoh, that it may become a serpent.'"

[Ex. 7:10](#) So Moses and Aaron came to Pharaoh, and thus they did just as the LORD had commanded; and Aaron threw his staff down before Pharaoh and his servants, and it became a serpent.

[Ex. 7:11](#) Then Pharaoh also called for the wise men and the sorcerers, and they also, the magicians of Egypt, did the same with their secret arts.

[Ex. 7:12](#) For each one threw down his staff and they turned into serpents. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs.

[Ex. 7:13](#) Yet Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he did not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

- God tells Moses that Pharaoh will ask him to work a miracle
 - When this happens, Moses is to use the serpent miracle God gave him
 - It was common in the ancient world for men to demand proof of an oracle's legitimacy in the form of miracles
 - We see this same pattern even in the time of Jesus
 - The people expect Jesus to perform miracles to validate His claims as Messiah
 - Often times Jesus obliged to prove His claims
 - God tells Moses to expect the same request and to honor it with the miracle God gave him for this purpose
 - God knows what Pharaoh will say, and so God has already given Moses the tools to respond
 - This is further proof of God's equipping power
 - Based on this clear example from Exodus, two things are abundantly clear
 - First, men spend way too much time worrying about our abilities to get the job done for God
 - That worry just gets in the way of our obedience
 - Secondly, all that worry is unnecessary because God is always going to equip us for the work He gives us
 - God has even prepared Moses with a miracle specially suited to meet the request of Pharaoh
- As Moses and Aaron came to Pharaoh, they perform the miracle as directed
 - Moses' staff miraculously becomes a snake

- Rather than become flustered, Pharaoh simply calls for his wise men and sorcerers and magicians
 - These men practice the occult, the dark arts
 - These men are similar to those who served in Nebuchadnezzar's court in Babylon
 - The text says in v.11 that these men performed "the same" as Moses using their secret arts
 - Based on the text, there is no hint that these events are parlor tricks or gimmicks
 - In both cases, the appearance of the serpent is a real event, a real miracle
 - The magicians' snakes are no less real than Moses'
 - Verse 11 tells us they were the same
 - This moment proves that miraculous signs and wonders are not unique to God
 - Satan has supernatural power as well, and he displays it here through the work of these magicians
 - Obviously, all power extends from God, so Satan's power to perform these miracles is a power God gave Satan
 - Furthermore, God is permitting Satan to work in this way for the time being
- The very fact that Satan can counterfeit God's work through signs and miracles is proof to us that we cannot form our understanding of truth on the basis of such things
 - Powers and miracles are not conclusive evidence of truth unless the message they support is in agreement with Scripture
 - The testimony of a prophet must comport with the overall testimony of Scripture, otherwise they are to be dismissed
 - At the core of this issue is the difference between experiential truth and expositional truth
 - Experiential truth is any experience that teaches a spiritual truth

- The moment of Pentecost was experiential truth for those who experienced it
- Expository truth is the truth revealed by the word of God
 - God's word is truth to all who learn it
 - The Bible itself teaches that expository truth always trumps experiential truth

Matt. 24:35 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

- If our experiences (e.g., feelings, thoughts, things we hear or events we witness) conflict with the word of God, then those experiences are not valid truth
 - For example, if we had witnessed this scene in Pharaoh's court, and if we relied entirely on experiential truth, we might conclude that God and Satan have equal power
 - But by the word of God, we know this is not true
 - Satan is not equal to God and cannot prevail
- We can have confidence that God will preserve His word in an accurate way because it is the pre-eminent source of truth in Creation
 - In fact, this scene gives us additional proof of the trustworthiness of Scripture, as handed down through the centuries within the Jewish nation
 - Moses never names the magicians who performed these miracles in Pharaoh's court
 - But as this story was told and retold in Jewish families through the centuries after Moses, the names of these men were preserved
 - Such that thousands of years later, Paul knew these names and recorded them in New Testament scripture

2Tim. 3:6 For among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses,
2Tim. 3:7 always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.
2Tim. 3:8 Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men of depraved mind, rejected in regard to the faith.

[2Tim. 3:9](#) But they will not make further progress; for their folly will be obvious to all, just as Jannes's and Jambres's folly was also.

- Notice that Paul names the magicians who performed in Pharaoh's court
 - They were Jannes and Jambres, men who opposed Moses
 - These names were preserved in Jewish tradition and validated when Paul included them in scripture under the inspiration of the Spirit
 - The point being that these two names were preserved accurately in Jewish tradition for centuries though Moses never recorded them
 - Therefore, it's all the more certain that God's word in written form was preserved accurately by the scribes of Israel
 - This word is God's word
- Here again we have a picture of the last days and the deliverance of the Jews during Tribulation
 - In that future time, Paul tells us that Satan will deceive the entire world with signs and wonders, seemingly equal to God

SLIDE 6/7-5

[2Th. 2:8](#) Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming;
[2Th. 2:9](#) that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders,
[2Th. 2:10](#) and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.

- Also, note Paul's purpose in mentioning these two men to Timothy
 - Paul uses them as examples of how the enemy can use deception and wonders to gain a foothold among weak Christians
 - They are men of depraved mind and without faith (rejected by God)
 - Paul says these deceivers will not win in the end, but they will fool some people

- They prey on the weak
 - And they deceive people who are weighed down by sin and seek for some greater experience beyond the word of God
 - Like those Hebrews mentions

[Heb. 5:13](#) For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant.

[Heb. 5:14](#) But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

- At this point, God gives a demonstration of the superiority of His power by making his snake swallow the snakes of the magicians
 - The whole scene must have been a bit bizarre, but it made the point to Pharaoh and the court
 - Nevertheless, Pharaoh felt no reason to comply with Moses' directive
 - Even had he been willing to acknowledge that Moses had power greater than his magicians, it didn't force Pharaoh to comply
 - So this miracle sets the stage for the coming plagues
- So now we're ready to begin studying the famous plagues of Egypt
 - Tonight, we'll start with an introduction to the plagues
 - First, these events are most properly called judgments, not plagues
 - Each of the ten events is a specific judgment delivered by God
 - Secondly, these judgments are targeted at achieving three outcomes
 - To free Israel
 - To punish Egypt
 - To condemn Egyptian idolatry
 - The first two reasons are clear enough from what we've already read
 - God has said repeatedly that He is acting to free Israel and punish Pharaoh for his stubbornness

- The third reason takes some additional study to discover
- When God prepares the tenth judgment, He says this to Moses

Ex. 12:12 'For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments – I am the LORD.

- Notice God says He is working to judge the gods of Egypt
- Later in Numbers, Moses records this:

Num. 33:3 They journeyed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the next day after the Passover the sons of Israel started out boldly in the sight of all the Egyptians,

Num. 33:4 while the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn whom the LORD had struck down among them. The LORD had also executed judgments on their gods.

- As Israel leaves Egypt, Moses notes that these judgments were executed upon Egypt's gods
- So these judgments are crafted in such a way that they expose the true nature of Egypt's gods – that they are not real gods after all
 - Each judgment takes a specific form that is designed to assault a set of Egyptian gods associated with that judgment
 - As we go through the judgments, we will connect each judgment to a god or gods of Egypt
 - The Egyptians themselves would have no choice but to take note of this connection
 - They will see each plague cutting to the heart of something they worshipped, thereby displaying that thing to be powerless in the face of God's power
- The next thing to note about the judgments is their orderliness
 - God is a God of order
 - Every detail about these events is crafted like pieces in a puzzle
 - In that way, God's wisdom and power and purposes are made evident

- The judgments follow multiple patterns
- The judgments themselves can be grouped into three groups of three
 - With the tenth plague standing by itself at the end SLIDE 6/7-6
 - The number 9 is the number for judgment in Scripture
 - While the number ten is the number of testimony
- They use natural phenomenon that have been intensified to an extreme degree
 - None of the plagues themselves are unprecedented by their nature
 - But in their intensity, they are unprecedented
 - The Egyptians worshipped gods that represented the creation, so God uses the creation to harm Egypt
- They come by the hand of different actors
 - The first three come by Aaron
 - The second three come by God acting alone
 - The final three come by Moses
- Some of the judgment include advanced warning
 - The warnings come in a specific pattern as well
 - The first two judgments of each group have warnings
 - The first warning of every group always comes in the morning, signaling a new series is starting
- The first two plagues are mimicked by the Egyptian magicians
 - As a result, they impact everyone, including the Jews
 - God's judgments are not impacting the Jews, but when the sorcerers get into the act, their work impacts the Jews
 - This reminds us that though God is not bringing judgment against His people, the enemy's response will produce collateral damage

- We see a similar pattern in Tribulation, where the Lord brings judgments against the world and then Satan responds by persecuting the believers
- After the first two plagues, the magicians cease copying God, and then the remaining plagues only impact Egypt
 - This is an example of the principle Peter teaches:

[2Pet. 2:9](#) then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment,

- The next pattern to note is that these plagues increase in severity by group
 - The first three are called loathsome by scripture
 - This means detestable or revolting
 - The Egyptians were greatly disturbed by them, but they themselves weren't impacted directly
 - After they end, all returns to normal
 - The second group are painful
 - They inflict discomfort against the Egyptian people
 - A more serious outcome
 - Finally, the last three are grievous and intensely destructive
 - They exceed anything before
 - They leave a lasting impact
- Altogether, these judgments require 6 months of time to play out, so this is not a quick experience
 - Next time we will begin to examine the plagues in groups