

Torah: Sh'mot (Exodus) 6:2 – 9:35
Haftarah: Yechezk'el (Ezekiel) 28:25–29:21
B'rit Hadashah: 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1

	<i>year 1</i> 6:21-7:7	<i>year 2</i> 7:8-8:15	<i>year 3</i> 8:16-9:35
1	6:2 – 5	7:8 – 13	8:16 – 23
2	6:6 – 9	7:14 – 18	8:24 – 28
3	6:10 – 13	7:19 – 25	9:1 – 7
4	6:14 – 19	7:26 – 29	9:8 – 16
5	6:20 – 25	8:1 – 6	9:17 – 21
6	6:26 – 28	8:7 – 11	9:22 – 26
7	6:29 – 7:7	8:12 – 15	9:27 – 35

<p>and HaShem said to Moshe rise early in the morning / and stand to face Paroh, behold, he is going out to the water / and you shall say to him thus says HaShem send out my people so that they may serve me</p>	<p><i>va'yómer ADONÁI el-Mosheh hash'kem ba'bóqer ve'hit'yatzev lif'ney Far'óh hinéh yotze' hamay'mah ve'amar'ta elayv koh amar ADONÁI shalákh amiy ve'ya'av'dúniy</i></p>	<p>וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה הִשְׁכֵּם בַּבֹּקֶר וְהִתְיַצֵּב לִפְנֵי פַרְעֹה הִנֵּה יוֹצֵא הַמַּיִמָּה וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה שְׁלַח עַמִּי יִעַבְדֵנִי:</p>
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The 10 plagues begin. There are two other accounts presented as condensed poetic paraphrases of the plagues: Ps. 78:43-51 (no lice, boils, or darkness) and Ps. 105:27-36 (no boils or pestilence). Here, three groups of three plagues are presented. The tenth is climactically on its own. The first two plagues of each group of are forewarned. The third plague strikes suddenly. In the first of each set of three, Pharaoh is warned in the morning, and Moshe is told to stand before the king. In the second of each set of three, Moshe is told to confront Pharaoh in his palace. In the first set, Aharon is the agent, whereas in the last set it is Moshe. This emphasizes that the plagues are deliberate, purposeful acts of God intended to both educate and judge, demonstrating the powerlessness of Egypt's "gods" in comparison to the supreme and sovereign God of Creation who controls nature for his purposes. The major theme is that through it all, both the children of Israel and all of Egypt will know HaShem.

Aliyah Highlights

1. **Ex. 8:16-23** The second triad of plagues begins, with the command to Paroh to “send (*sha-lakh* – שָׁלַח – Piel Stem: intensive action, active voice, iterative) my people so that they may serve Me.” The 4th plague is literally “swarm/mixture” (‘*arov* – עָרֹב).
2. **Ex. 8:24-28** Paroh seems to accept Moshe’s reasoning concerning the Egyptian view of sacred animals. The redundant use of the personal pronoun (lit. “I myself, I will...”) emphasizes Paroh’s attempt to assert his presumed superior authority.
3. **Ex. 9:1-7** With the 5th plague, the absurdity of worshipping sacred animals is exposed when HaShem strikes them with pestilence, likely from the piles of rotting frogs that contaminate the land with disease. It is now “the hand of HaShem” (*yad-ADONAI* – יַד־יְהוָה), not the finger (8:15). The “hand” represented power regarding the “gods”, not only in punishment but in forcefulness. Paroh’s confidence is weakened, evidenced by his investigation into the protected status of Isra’el.
4. **Ex. 9:8-16** The 3rd plague of this set arrives without warning and by action taken before Paroh such that the outbreak is seen as clearly sent by HaShem for this time and purpose. Human life is now directly touched. So severe is the disease, it is singled-out in De. 28:27. The final triad of plagues begins with a lengthy warning, noting that Paroh himself has been spared not by his own power or merit, but for HaShem’s purpose: to reveal his name and power throughout the whole earth.
5. **Ex. 9:17-21** HaShem shows compassion to anyone who will respond.
6. **Ex. 9:22-26** The 7th plague of hail and fire – terror, ruin, catastrophe.
7. **Ex. 9:27-35** Paroh’s use of the phrase, “this time...” (*ba-pa’am* – בַּפְּעַם) is identical to HaShem’s warning (v. 14). His concession is now unqualified. HaShem is sovereign over creation, not the Egyptian gods, or any other “god,” especially Paroh himself. Yet Moshe knows his confession is just empty words.

Parashah 14-3 Va'era נִגְזַרְנָה

Thought Focus

A Three-Day Journey? This request for 3-days off would seem to indicate their return. The first request was simply to celebrate a festival in the desert (Ex. 5:1). The second request was to go on a 3-day journey to slaughter to ADONAI, lest he strike them w/plague/sword. This was even stated to Moshe at the burning bush (Ex. 3:18). This go-to-worship-and-return theme runs all the way through the 10-plagues narrative. It was never requested that the people were to leave, never to return.

Was Moshe participating in deceit? Commentators say:

- Yes of course! It was impossible to tell the truth to a tyrant such as Pharaoh and survive
- Moshe did tell the truth, that they were going to worship God, and he did not explicitly state that they would return
- Start with a small request which will prove Pharaoh's tyrannical heart
- In wartime it is permissible to deceive.

But this is already a pattern that we've seen in Torah:

- Ya'aqov leaving Lavan in deceit
- Ya'aqov parting from 'Esav not intending to meet up
- Shimon and Levi deceive the people of Sh'khem regarding Dinah
- 3 times the patriarchs acted deceitfully regarding the status of their wives/sisters

When the Jews were outside of the land, they were "powerless in an age of power," forced to create false impressions. THIS IS NOT HOW THINGS SHOULD BE. But it was before they were protected by their border, ruled by the structure of Torah.

Remember that the first request to worship caused things to get worse. So, what is Torah trying to teach us? Not to justify deceit, but to condemn an oppressive system where stating the truth could put your life at risk.

A Torah lifestyle promotes intellectual honesty and purity of moral truthfulness. A world where survival requires deceit is not the world in which HaShem wants us to live.

(From the teachings of R. Jonathan Sacks)

Daily Devotional questions for reflection and application

1. (6:2) Does God speak to you? Do you answer and obey - even if you don't like what you hear? (Num 12:7-8, 1Sa 13:13, Mat 23:13, Heb 12:6-7, Job 5:17-18, Pro 3:11-12, Rev 3:19)
2. (6:14) How important is your "lineage?" Are you a leader in your clan? What does Yeshua's lineage prove? (Mat 1, Luk 3, Gen 49:10, 1Ch 17:14, Isa 11:1, Act 2:36, Psa 2:1-12, Heb 1:1-5)
3. (6:29) By what authority do you speak and act? Has God called you, and equipped you to speak for Him? (Mat 21:23, Mat 10:40-42, Zec 14:9)
4. (7:9) Do you ever step beyond your position or authority as a believer? Can you trust God to do what only He can do? (Isa 64:1-2, Isa 8:16-18, Rom 8:35-39)
5. (8:7) Do you act confidently in what God has set before you to do? What can you do to build up your faith and discernment? (Mar 11:23-24, Mat 17:20, Mat 21:21, Luk 17:6, Eze 13:1-3, Luk 11:9-13)
6. (8:19) What sets you apart from non-believers in Yeshua? Does your life prove this? (Joh 17:11, Isa 56:3-7, Eph 2:11-13)
7. Are you choosing to break the abusive patterns in your life (and past!) that need to be broken? (Ecc 5:1, Isa 1:18, 1Sa 2:35, 2Ti 2:22, 1Co 6:18, Ecc 11:9-10, 3Jo 11)