

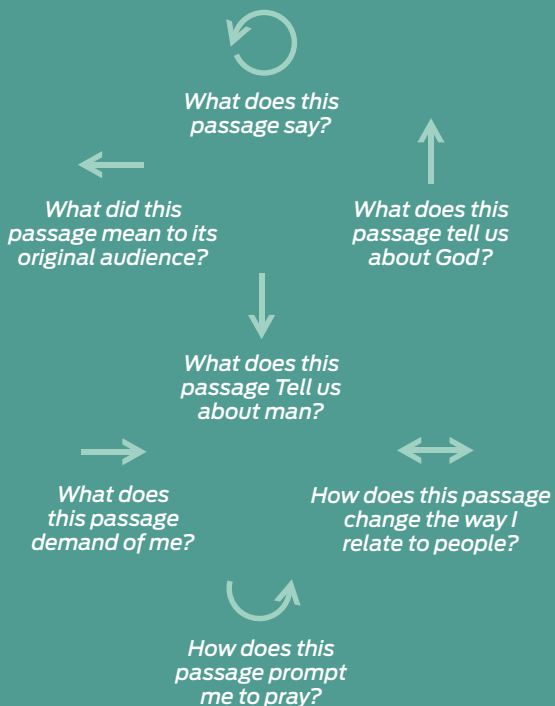
Daily Devotions



Day 1

Exodus 5:1–6:27

The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



When Moses first addressed Pharaoh and said God wanted the Egyptian to let His people go, Pharaoh’s response was to immediately question who God was and what authority He had (5:2). It is a response of open defiance against God, a posture of the mind and heart that Pharaoh would come to regret. When we read this, we are right to pause in disbelief. How foolish of Pharaoh! But, thanks to the work of the Holy Spirit, we should be quick to recognize that we are prone to echo Pharaoh in our sin. There are times when we stand before God in defiance and ask Him who He is as we arm wrestle Him for control of our lives.

This is why the gospel is such good news to us. This is why God’s unending mercy and grace is so critical—not just as the pathway to salvation, but for the journey forward from the moment of our salvation. This is why it is so vital for us to understand Christ has given us His righteousness. Even in Christ, we want to resurrect our old, dead, fallen selves and live in rebellion. We would rather live as a fraud, than live out our new, true identity as children of God.

In what ways might you be living in open rebellion against God?

Exodus 7:1–8:32

Imagine if Pharaoh's heart was not hardened. Maybe he would have let God's people go sooner and likely would have tried to take credit for doing so. After a few difficult plagues, surely the people would have been grateful for their leader's wisdom. However, that isn't what happened. Instead, there was an even greater purpose in Pharaoh's hardened heart. Each of the plagues was designed to confront a different false god. Because Pharaoh's heart was hardened, God was able to strike down ten false gods, including Pharaoh himself. God did not just beat one Egyptian god, or a couple gods—He defeated ten of them and showed that He, the One true God has all authority and power. He can do what many different Egyptian gods were supposedly needed to do.

This was the wisdom of God, this was the heart of God, in hardening Pharaoh's heart.

Why is it important to hold God's sovereignty and your responsibility in balance? Do you tend to lean one way? Why?

Exodus 9:1–10:29

The Nile had turned to blood. Frogs, gnats, and flies had invaded the land. Livestock had died and people and animals had suffered festering boils. God then promised destructive hail. God had revealed His amazing power, and He would continue to do so. But don't miss what He told Moses to pass along to Pharaoh before the hail: "By now I could have stretched out my hand and struck you and your people with a plague, and you would have been obliterated from the earth" (9:15).

The power the Egyptians and Israelites were seeing was a sliver of what God is capable of. The same God who created the universe by His words could also speak the Egyptians out of existence. Egypt was not seeing God's full power for one reason: grace. It was God's grace that withheld the rightful judgment the Egyptians and Israelites deserved. This same grace holds His judgment today. This is the message of the gospel. God is holy and powerful, and we deserve judgment. At the same time, God is loving and merciful, so He withholds His judgment from us and placed it on His Son instead.

How aware are you of God's grace day-by-day and minute-by-minute?

Exodus 11:1–12:28

Four days. That is how long the Israelite families were to take in the lamb they had chosen for the Passover. Why four days? Why not choose this lamb right before the Passover? One reason seems to be allowing time for the families to observe the lamb and notice any defects that would disqualify it from being a worthy sacrifice. But there is another potential reason: attachment.

God may have wanted the families to get to know this lamb. Perhaps even to love it. Because in doing so, they would appreciate the sacrifice of this lamb all the more. Saving the life of the firstborn came at a cost—and it wasn't paid by just a lamb pulled randomly from the flock—it was by a lamb that they had come to know.

If so, this is yet another layer of complexity and beauty of the picture of the gospel the Passover painted. Our salvation did not come from a random person. Our sacrifice was provided by the spotless Lamb of God who we know and love.

How does your love for Christ deepen your appreciation of the cross?

Exodus 2:29–51

As we read through Exodus 12, we might be overwhelmed with the rush of details leading up to Israel's departure from their Egyptian captivity. The details of the Passover observance are rich and theologically weighty. The death and wailing through the land is sobering. The release and plundering are affirming. So it is easy for us to miss a detail that seems small, but is quite significant. As Pharaoh told Moses to take his people and leave, he asked Moses to bless him (v. 32). This is important, because blessings always move from the superior toward the subordinate. By this simple request, Pharaoh acknowledged what God wanted him to learn all along—that God was greater.

We cannot go too far and see this as a salvific experience for Pharaoh: After this, he chased Moses and the Israelites, intending to slaughter or recapture them. But this request is further evidence of God's wisdom in hardening Pharaoh's heart. Through his hardness of heart, Pharaoh—and no doubt many other Egyptians—finally saw and acknowledged God's glory.

In what ways might God be using you to reveal His glory to others—even through your suffering and adversity?