

Torah P3 - Exodus E1: 1-18

Q&R

Podcast Date: April 3, 2017

(38.58)

Speakers in the audio file:

Jon Collins

Tim Mackie

Jon: Hey, this is Jon at The Bible Project. This summer on the podcast, we've been releasing a series that we did last year on our YouTube channel. It was a series of Q&R episodes, question, and response. We talked through books in the Old Testament, we did a few themes, and we're releasing those now on the podcast, so that you can listen to them from the comfort of your own earbuds.

The audio quality is little poor than normal so I apologize for that. This was a live feed on YouTube, but it's worth a listen. The questions and discussion are really great.

In this episode, we cover the beginning of the book of Exodus, Exodus chapters 1 through 18. And we get into some really tough questions like: why does God harden Pharaoh's heart? And did the Exodus story actually happen in history or is it just a myth? Thanks for joining us. Here we go.

Tim: Hey, welcome.

Jon: Happy Tuesday.

Tim: Happy Tuesday.

Jon: We're going to be answering questions on Exodus 1 through 18, which is the Exodus story, so start sending them in. We'll tag those, put them on a spreadsheet, and look at them, and then we'll answer as many as possible. We've got a bunch coming in. You've marked some of these.

Tim: Josh, you've asked a question that comes up really often when people read the story of the Exodus, which is about God hardening Pharaoh's heart. Your question is: why does God harden Pharaoh's heart in Exodus chapter 9? What are the implications that that should have on our view of God? What does it reveal about God?

Jon: Before you answer, can you just set this up a little bit more?

Tim: Yes.

Jon: So Exodus story.

Tim: Thank you.

Jon: We finished Genesis, and we've got Joseph and his brothers hanging out in Egypt. Turn the page to Exodus, and all of a sudden...it's much later. How many years later? We don't really know.

Tim: It's hundreds.

Jon: Hundreds of years later. And now, the Hebrew people are much larger and they're slaves to the Egyptian Pharaoh, and their life's not awesome. Then we get into the Exodus story, which is Moses' rise as the leader and taking them out of Egypt. You're all familiar with this story, likely, from Prince of Egypt and Sunday School curriculum. Very famous story. Very important story in the Bible.

One particular aspect of the story that really trips people up as confusing is God will at times "harden Pharaoh's heart" is the phrase that's used. And so, you get the sense of like, maybe Pharaoh wouldn't have been such a bad dude. And then God comes in and goes, "Nope, I'm going to make you a bad dude." Why would God purposefully make someone do something bad, I think is what people want to know.

Tim: Yeah, that's right. A few things. Because this is important, we'll spend a little time on it. One is to set the playing field for who Pharaoh is in the story, and why the narrative develops him as a character so much.

In terms of Israel or the characters of the Bible interacting with other nations, the biggest bad guys so far in the story of the Bible were the bad guy, the cycle of sin in Genesis 1 to 11, but leading up to Babylon—the tower in the city of Babylon in Genesis 11. So that's the first picture of like a whole bunch of people united as a nation opposed to God.

But Pharaoh and Egypt appear as the first large, full-scale empire in the Bible that thrives and exists off of oppressing and enslaving other people. That's the first in the storyline of the Bible. So the narrative here is offering this portrait of the worst of humanity even more than Babylon. Pharaoh, he's an archetypal character.

Jon: What do you mean by archetypal that?

Tim: The story is anchored in history. But Pharaoh is not a name, it's a title. Many kings were called Pharaoh. And there are many kings covered in the story. There's a few that appear throughout the book. So it's a title. It's a royal title.

This character is larger than life. He's depicted as this insane maniac type leader who's willing to destroy his own nation just to save his own pride and power and so on. So I think it's important to recognize that's the nature of the Pharaoh character in the book, and what the story then becomes a showdown is who is the king of the nations?

Is it Yahweh, the God of Israel, who's going to confront evil, and save His people or is rebellious humanity archetype, and Pharaoh is going to win? So that's the showdown. Exodus is very much a showdown story of one of the ways that God confronts and deals with evil among the nations.

Then I raised the question: well, what do you do with this God hardening Pharaoh's heart business? All I can say is it's crucially important to read the story from beginning to end, and not just take snippets of the story out of context or out of sequence. Because when you do that, which is what people often do, they make up a new story about Pharaoh's heart that the story of Exodus doesn't actually tell.

And so, I think that that idea of God's simply making Pharaoh hardened against him so that he can warp Pharaoh and show how powerful He is, that's not actually faithful to the sequence of the storyline. It's really important to get that. So I don't know.

Actually, I knew this question was coming and so I have a handout on this that I take classes through when I go through the book of Exodus. David wants to just throw my screen up on the screen. Quickly, just to walk through here. This looks like a boring chart but that's exactly what it is. But sometimes boring charts can be exciting.

The first time we hear about Pharaoh's hard heart it's when God Commission's Moses back in chapter 3. And what God says is that He knows that Pharaoh will resist. That's the first thing He says, "I know that Pharaoh is going to resist." And so, God says He's going to harden Pharaoh's heart.

So the first thing we know is not actually got doing it. The first thing is that God knows Pharaoh will resist. And then He says He's going to harden Pharaoh's heart. So it raises a question, okay, God knows, but does the fact that He knows means that He's pre-programmed Pharaoh to harden his heart? Is that what it's saying?

Well, the second statement about Pharaoh's heart comes in chapter 7. It's actually right before the first plague. And it says simply that Pharaoh's heart became hard, or grew hard, unless you're reading the English Standard Version.

If you're reading the English Standard Version, it says, "Pharaoh's heart was hardened." And that's really unfortunate that they chose to do that. I think the translators of the ESV kind of showing their hand in terms of their theological views about God's will, and human free will, and so on. Because of the word used in Hebrew is not passive "was hardened." It's just simply a state of being hard. It was hard.

And so, the first time you hear about Pharaoh's hard heart, it's not clear who hardened Pharaoh's heart. And then it gets intentionally unclear. Did God do it or did Pharaoh do it?

Jon: This is in chapter 7?

Tim: This is in chapter 7. Then the first five plagues, as you can just see right here on hand out, every statement about Pharaoh's heart was either just that it was hard, or twice you get in plague two and plague four, Pharaoh hardened his own heart. So it's very clear it's not God doing it, it's him doing it.

It's not until the sixth plague of boils that we hear of God's stepping in to harden Pharaoh's heart. And then in the plagues that follow, it's God hardening Pharaoh's heart. I think it's really significant. So what the story is exploring is that God...in every one of these plagues, it begins with God telling Moses, "Go warn Pharaoh that this is about to happen so that he can humble himself so that it doesn't happen. That happens every single time in the plagues.

So the portrait is not that God pre-programmed Pharaoh's hardness of heart. It's that God knew that Pharaoh would resist. And God knew that at some point he would start heartening Pharaoh's heart. But that's preceded by a whole wave of just Pharaoh being a jerk in his own right. The story is really making that clear.

What the story is trying to say is there is a way of thinking about human evil that God is not responsible for human evil. Just like God didn't author Pharaoh's hard heart. But there comes a point where Pharaoh reaches a point of no return in his evil and his mania, and his intoxication with his own power.

And so, at that point, God then turns Pharaoh's evil back onto himself and hardens his heart—that's already been hardened by Pharaoh himself. So I think the story is offering this really sophisticated way of thinking about how God can use even really horrible people to accomplish His purposes in the world.

Jon: And most archetypically like violent and power hungry person in a biblical narrative, God then uses for his own good.

Tim: Is evil to defeat evil. God confronts evil by turning evil back on itself, I think is the portrait of the story. So we should walk away from the story going, "God's powerful, He's wise, and Pharaoh had every possible chance to humble...Actually, five chances to humble himself.

So that was the longest answer, but the question comes up so often, and it was worth.

Jon: Is there somewhere else in the Bible where it talks about God hardening an individual's heart? I mean, Paul brings it up in Romans.

Tim: It's in relationship to Pharaoh. Yeah, he quotes from the Pharaoh's story. The story of Pharaoh is the most significant and developed one. What's interesting is that in the

Pentateuch, as you go on with the story of Israel into the wilderness, the people of Israel start acting like Pharaoh in terms of their abstinence, their stubbornness, their grumbling, and God actually comes to say eventually that Israel's heart has become hardened.

So the people of Israel become like Pharaoh. And that's part of the strategy of the story is that God wants to save His people from Pharaoh, but eventually, they become Pharaoh-like themselves as the story goes on.

Jon: I wonder if the basis of the concern of this question is really just for myself. Well, I get to a point where God might harden my heart. Like if I refuse enough, and enough and enough, is there a point of no return for me or for my friends? Is that what the biblical narratives trying to get us to wrestle with?

Tim: I think it's warning us, but the point of the warning is that you don't do that. It's very much like the warnings in the Letter to the Hebrews. They pretty stuff...like they're really intense. And the point of the warnings is that you don't do that.

If you're at all concerned about yourself being at the point of no return, you know you're not at the point of no return because you care about it. It's a concern to you.

Jon: That's a good point.

Tim: So I guess, in that case, to be concerned about is the point at which you would no longer be concerned about it. So, in that case, you wouldn't care. You know what I'm saying?

Jon: Totally, totally.

Tim: So what the story is not saying is that God has pre-programmed some people to be evil and face His judgment. The story's not saying that at face value reason.

Jon: There's a little conversation going on about you said ESV was unfortunate to do that.

Tim: I think so.

Jon: But ESV is still good translation.

Tim: ESV is a wonderful translation. It's a great translation. I just think in this particular set of instances they interpreted by means of their translation in a way that they didn't have to. And every translation has to do that at some point. There's some parts of the Hebrew Bible or the Greek New Testament—

Jon: By the way, we get that question a lot: what translation do you recommend? And I always hear you say, "Pick one..."

Tim: All of them.

Jon: All of them. Pick one, read it, and when you start reading more, you'll start to see the nuances between them.

Tim: Yes. My philosophy of translations it's like a bag of golf clubs. I don't golf. It's the only analogy I can think of. The bag of golf clubs. You know, you don't try and drive a ball 100 yards with a putter. So don't try and do close study of the Bible with the New Living Translation.

But if you're on the bus and you just want to take in a whole bunch of the Bible at once, then read the New Living Translation because it's really more like a paraphrase. Whereas the New American Standard is terrible English but it's great for close by study. It just depends on the purpose. The ESV is a wonderful translation just like all of them are.

Jon: David wrote, "The one you read is the best translation."

Tim: The one you read. Thank you, David.

Jon: Cool.

Tim: There you go.

Jon: What's another question we can hit?

Tim: Another question.

Jon: Someone just asked about the redemptive story of Exodus. We're actually going to do a whole theme video that explores the Exodus as this archetypal story that biblical authors continue to use to talk about God's salvation. That's really a big discussion.

Tim: Yeah, totally. The Exodus story is so important. If the life, and the death, and the resurrection of Jesus is like a foundation story for Christians, the Exodus narrative is the foundation story in Jewish tradition and Christian tradition. Jesus did, after all, culminate his week in Jerusalem with a Passover meal to explain the meaning of the cross.

So the Exodus story, the way the story works, it's crucially important for understanding the storyline of the Bible. And we're going to make a video about that.

Jon: Yeah, that will be great. How about this next one?

Tim: A question from Valeria. You asked a great question that for people who actually read the Exodus story instead of just watch the movie read and are like, "What is going on here?" It's a story and Exodus chapter 4. And Valeria [SP] asked, "What's the deal with cutting off the foreskin of her son in Exodus 4? What's the significance of her actions?"

Actually, the story is even more bizarre than just that. It's nighttime. It's the night in the story leading up to the Exodus. All of a sudden, we're told that God went looking for Moses to kill him, and then Zipporah, his wife steps in and circumcises their son and then touches foreskin to Moses' feet, and then says, "You were a bridegroom of blood to me." And then the narrative says she was talking about circumcision. That's the story.

Jon: That's not a typical Western story. You're not going to find that in your Disney storybooks.

Tim: There are numerous stories like this in the Pentateuch that are strange, that their meaning isn't never fully explained within the story itself. It's very similar to: why did God reject Cane's offering but not Abel's?

The story is like this, and the point isn't that you solve the riddle of the story. The point is to see how it fits into the narrative.

Essentially, what it's a story about, is that Moses hasn't circumcised his son the way that God commanded the Israelites to. And so God, He's going to hold Egypt accountable for its evil and its injustice. But God has also called His own people, especially the leader, Moses to a high degree of responsibility.

And so, even Moses is accountable to the highest degree of faithfulness. And he wasn't. And so, his life is in danger for it. It's the strange story that reminds you that God's not playing favorites here as He comes to confront Egypt, but that He calls even His own people to...the stakes are high.

So I think that's the role of that story in the flow of the narrative. In terms of the ancient cultural connections of bridegroom, of blood, nobody knows what that means. I could show you my stack of commentaries. I think I had a stack of - what? Five right here and there are about eight different views between these five

commentaries on what exactly that story is. So anyhow, in the flow of the narrative, that was pretty clear what's going on there.

Jon: Cool.

Tim: So we do another question?

Jon: Do another question.

Tim: Great. Lukas had a really good question about the 10 plagues. "Is there any significant pattern to the order of the 10 plagues, the water, the blood, then frogs, then lice? If so, is this pattern found anywhere else in Scripture?" That's a great question, Lucas.

There is a significance to how they're ordered, but it's not quite what you think. And lo and behold, I'll just take you back to my Exodus handout that I put in from my classes to people.

Jon: Can we make this available to people?

Tim: Yeah. I think it's up on my website.

Jon: Okay. You can get this at timmackie.com.

Tim: At timmackie.com, in the upper right, there's a tab called "Western Seminary," and I put all my handouts for all my classes for Western up there. And this is just my Exodus handout.

Jon: Good resource.

Tim: The literary design of the plagues is really intentional and cool. There's 10 of them, obviously. I think you'll see the chart appear in front of you up here. But the first nine are arranged in these three triads, and there are all of these different types of symmetry going on between them.

So the first each of the triads, the water, the blood, the flies, and the hail, all begin with Moses taking a morning stroll out to go confront Pharaoh and to warn him that this plague is coming. They're broken into triads by this morning scene.

Then the second plague of each triad, the frogs, the lice plague and the livestock and the locusts all begin with Moses going into Pharaoh's palace to warn him. They all have that parallel. Then the third plague in each triad, there's no warning. It's just Moses just does it. So the gnats, the boils and the darkness. The third—

Jon: It just came up so just do one quick little overview again. This is the first one, right?

Tim: Oh, God, yeah. The triads or vertical here. 1, 2, 3 is a triad, 4, 5, 6 is a triad, 7, 8, and 9. But then there are all these symmetries across them. So the first in each triad is Moses warning Pharaoh in the morning.

Jon: Those are all morning.

Tim: Those all happen in the morning. The second of each triad, the warning happened in the palace. And the third of each triad, there's no warning. So it's very intentional.

Jon: It just happens.

Tim: That's right. What's also interesting is the main actor of who does the action is Aaron in the first triad, only Moses in the third triad, and then it's a split between Moses and Aaron and Moses in the second triad. To me, what's interesting, these are signs that the order and the shaping of the stories—

Jon: Well thought out.

Tim: Very well thought out. Because here's what's interesting is that there are two other accounts of the plagues on Egypt in the Hebrew Bible. One of them is in Psalm 78, and another one is in Psalm 105. The plagues are mentioned, but not in this order, and not all of them are mentioned.

So I think what we can say is this, is that the story about the plagues existed in multiple forms. And the one before us in the book of Exodus has been given a very intentional literary design for reading comprehension, perhaps memory comprehension. But it's not like we're watching a video camera. I think that's my point.

So as far as the significance of the order, there have been lots of theories about that, and I haven't seen any that is super convincing. But there clearly is a design to them if there's not necessarily an order.

It's surely significant that the Nile River is the first target because that was the live stream of all of Egypt. The Nile was seen as the provision of the Gods of Egypt and so on. So the fact that God strikes at the heart of their agriculture and water source and all that shows the significance. But anyway.

Jon: Some people think there's significance to the Egyptian gods, Egyptian culture with all of these, right?

Tim: Yeah, that's right. In chapter 12, God says that He sent the plagues to defeat Pharaoh and the Gods of Egypt—brings judgment on the Gods of Egypt. But it doesn't specify any more than that. So yeah, we know that the plague of darkness, the water to blood, that certain animals were view to sacred embodiments of the gods. But again, the text doesn't develop that very much. So we're shooting from the hip when we say that certain plagues are connected to some gods and so no.

So, Luke, you asked the question about the plague on the firstborn. The 10th plague is the plague of the destroyer going throughout Egypt and the firstborn all throughout Egypt die. I mean, just to say, at first off at bottom, I'm very uncomfortable with the story, and I just have to deal with that. There are a number of stories in the Bible that I'm just uncomfortable with. And what can you do about it?

The story is about Joshua and Israel invading the land, and their treatment of certain Canaanite towns is also like fits into a similar category. I think it's just important, like, it's not heresy to say that something in the Bible makes you uncomfortable. That's okay.

The way the narrative works, that's not the first thing that God does. It's actually the last thing and it's the culmination. Ans it wraps the story all the way back around to Pharaoh who slaughtered all of the Israelite boys by having them thrown into the river. It's important to recognize the story has that arc to it.

Jon: And we show that in our animation.

Tim: That's right.

Jon: Actually, we were talking about when we were animating that, like, how gruesome is this going to be showing babies thrown into a river? Because that could get pretty ugly looking.

Tim: I mean, we chose to depict it in a way that is disturbing, and that makes you think about the-

Jon: You see a baby hand sinking into the river. It's pretty intense.

Tim: So I think the first thing to recognize is the 10th plague is God bringing justice that matches what Pharaoh did to the Israelites. But of course, the question from my point of view is, couldn't He have just done that on Pharaoh? Pharaoh was the bad guy, so why not just his household and his family?

Jon: Instead if everyone.

Tim: And I resonate with that. I resonate with that. I'm not sure what else to say about it except that what makes 10th plague different is that God did provide a way of shelter from His act of justice. And that's exactly what the Passover lamb is all about, is that the lamb could be offered in place of the firstborn son.

We're not told how many people took advantage of that. It didn't specify that only Israelites could be in those houses. So I think the point of the story...in terms of what happened in history, we don't know. We don't know. But in terms of the way the story works is that God brings a severe act of justice that makes us uncomfortable. But as He does so, at the same time, He provides a substitute, the Passover lamb that gives a way of escape.

And that's an important way that the Passover story works, it's going to be the way that Jesus Himself will draw upon the Passover story to explain the meaning of his own death. He explains the meaning of his death as the death of the Passover lamb.

So Jesus also predicted a really a horrific act of God's judgment on Jerusalem, that the whole city would be destroyed, and he was going to the cross to die on behalf of his people so that it could be avoided. So there you go. That's my response. It's not an answer. That's my response. That's how I deal with Exodus story.

There are times when God's involvement and partnership with humans, apparently in God's freedom, He's chosen to partner with humans. Humans are pretty screwed up. And so, God, it seems, ends up in the stories to be put in these situations where even the just decision is a messy one. And that's kind of where the stories of the Canaanites and death of the firstborn fits for me. So there you go.

Jon: A lot of heavy questions.

Tim: Yeah, totally.

Jon: I feel like every Q&A it's like the obvious question.

Tim: Well, that's good. Those are the one—

Jon: In fact, you want to give your - I call the disclaimer, you call it the—

Tim: I'm just speaking as Tim Mackie, who's a fellow reader and studier of the Bible, just like you guys. We're not going to make a video about that necessarily. And I could be wrong. There could be things that are wrong and I just said, I hope not, and I don't think so. So just there's that disclaimer.

Jon: These Q&A's will get into territory that the videos and study guides, and all that stuff we won't wait into because it's not as important to understand the central story of

the Bible. But as you begin to grapple with the authority of scripture in your life because you follow Jesus, these are questions are going to arise out of our modern worldview. So I'm glad we can just talk about them.

Tim: Greg Peterson asked the question that is very common about the Exodus story and its relationship to history. The way you put the question is...You Greg, I believe Exodus is actual history. However, many people believe that's just a moralizing story because there's no record of it in Egyptian history. Is there a way to explain that? How do you deal with that?" That's a great question.

My response. I'm not an ancient Egyptian historian, but I've done some homework on this question. The first question is on the whole, what kind of historical evidence would we expect to find about enslaved people group, who existed in ancient Empire? Do we have any evidence for any other people group that the Egyptians enslaved?

Jon: I have no idea. Do we?

Tim: No, it's the same answer for the Israelites. We know the enslaved people, and we know that the Egyptians saw the tribe of Israel in the land of Canaan as a threat to them. There's a later than Exodus Period Pharaoh guy named Merneptah. There's a famous statue where he inscribed all the inhabitants of the land of Canaan that he hated, and conquered, and battled. And Israel was one of them. So they knew about them.

Jon: They are aware of them.

Tim: They are aware of them, yeah.

Jon: Would that have been before or after?

Tim: Would have been after. So think about what survives from ancient Egypt today. If you go to Cairo or something, what do you see? What you see are the remains of royal architecture. Huge, huge structures—the pyramids and these temples.

And then what has survived in terms of the art and the text? Like there's one famous temple called Medinet Habu that just tells the story of Ramesses in a huge artistic picture of him just whopping all of his enemies and battle just destroying them utterly. So there you go. What survives from the ancient world is royal propaganda in the form of pyramid, temples, and palaces. The shanty town refugee camps of have an enslaved immigrant population...

Jon: They are not going to make a monument to that.

Tim: ...those were wiped away in the sands of Egypt after a decade. So what kind of evidence would we expect to find archaeologically? And the fact that there isn't any shouldn't surprise us at all.

Jon: So we shouldn't be surprised if there's nothing?

Tim: The fact that there aren't any textual references mentioning it. Here, you have to get into the arc of ancient battle accounts and historical Chronicles. Because, again, most of what survives to us of ancient Egyptian history is royal propaganda on behalf of these kings.

So is there was an event where the God of an immigrant group brought plagues and pestilence on the land of Egypt, and that that immigrant group escaped does that the kind of thing and Egyptian King would want to memorialize for history? Well, no. This is kind of thing that gets glossed over.

So my whole point, I'm not trying to say, therefore, that proves the historical evidence for the Exodus. I'm just saying it's not surprising that there's no mention of the Israelites in Egypt in their historical records or archaeological data. It's the kind of event where what mark would it leave on history if nobody wrote it down?

So the mark that we have on history is the Exodus account itself—the memory of the Israelite people who went through. And that memory has been formed and shaped theologically and with literary design. And so we have to recognize looking at a video camera. But I think it's important to say it's rooted in a historical memory of the things that God of Israel did on their behalf. Good question, Greg.

Jon: Great question. It's a lot geekier answer than I was expecting.

Tim: Really?

Jon: Yeah. You knew a lot about Egyptian monuments and stuff.

Tim: There you go. I did go there, so it helps anchor it in memory. More questions?

Jon: Let's see. We have 15 minutes; we'll do a couple more questions. What do you think about lightning round questions?

Tim: I don't know what that means.

Jon: What if like, you have literally 10 seconds to answer as best as you can.

Tim: I think that's impossible. I don't know if I'm capable.

Jon: You can say pass. Let's try.

Tim: It takes me 10 seconds to just say yes.

Jon: Let's just try. Why did God wait so long to save His people from Egypt? Why is it predicted that Israel would be enslaved for so long? That's two questions. Why did God wait so long to save His people from Egypt?

Tim: I don't know.

Jon: Why is it predicted that Israel would be in slavery for so long?

Tim: Who can know the answer to such a question.

Jon: Teresa Phil [SP], there you go.

Tim: It's a great question, but who can know why do bad things happen to good people.

Jon: Does the Exodus story encapsulate the story of what God is doing in the world in novel-like form? That's from Ava Shake. Hi Ava.

Tim: Yes, but, and then a wrong qualification.

Jon: Yes, but.

Tim: It has a beautiful literary design to it like I've already said. And the story is archetypal. It's rooted in historical memory, but it's developing it as an archetype as one of the ways that God confronts systemic injustice and evil in the world, that He brings disaster on empires that bring disaster and oppress others. That's for sure.

That's why as the Prophet, prophetic authors, and the author of Revelation is they envision what justice would look like when Babylon would fall, or Assyria or the Roman Empire. They use the imagery of the 10 plagues. That's why the seven bowls and trumpets in the book of Revelation, or just 10 plagues put in a blender and then pour it out on Babylon.

Jon: This is the language that we have now to talk about God's redemptive purposes.

Tim: That's right. When God confronts evil in the world, it looks like the Exodus story.

Jon: And that's why it's so important that the Exodus story is at the foundation of how you think about the Bible and God's redemptive nature because the language we have, that's the blocks that we have freshly?

Tim: Yeah, the story works there are long periods where you wonder where God is and horrible things are happening. And then there are surprising moments in history where God intervenes in dramatic ways to confront evil.

Jon: It takes down Empire.

Tim: And then also to bring mercy and a substitute and a way of escape from His justice on human evil. And that's what Passover is, that's what the passage through the Red Sea is. And then when God acts in judgment and mercy, the response is worship and praise, which is the Song of Sea in Exodus 15.

Jon: Or the word salvation.

Tim: Or the word salvation developed. So the Exodus story is itself an archetype giving us what does salvation mean in the Bible. And the first answer to that question is, in the Bible story is the Exodus story, that's what salvation looks like. That was Teresa?

Jon: I don't remember now. That was way over 10 seconds.

Tim: Yeah, sorry. The 10-second answer, well, it's not too complex to have 10-second answer.

Jon: That's true. I was trying to blitz through some of these.

Tim: Here we go. Joshua Lloyd Parker. That's an interesting question. "A lot of theologians liken the Exodus out of Egypt to the book of Revelation with Pharaoh being a type of the Antichrist and Moses and Aaron being the two witnesses. What do you think about that?"

Jon: Oh, interesting.

Tim: That's a good question, Josh. And I like the way you're thinking or I like the way that theologians are thinking. So the point is, that Exodus story provides this pattern or this archetype. And so yeah, the book of Revelation is definitely using the Exodus story as the archetype to think about God's confrontation.

I think in John the visionaries day with Rome is he knows it, but in his day, Rome is just another instance of the big, bad Egypt Babylon archetype. And so, he calls Rome Babylon, but he uses the imagery of the defeat of Egypt for the victim.

Then, of course, like John's, not just writing about Rome. He's writing about the archetypal...As many empires as come throughout human history are what John is describing in the book of Revelation.

And so, when it comes to the antichrist, the antichrist, he's kind of like Voltron. You guys remember Voltron? One of my favorite characters in the "Transformers Universe," where the constructor cons [SP], construction machines. But then when they needed to defeat the Autobots, they would form together into the ultimate constructor con. And so that's Babylon. That's Pharaoh and that's Babylon in the Bible.

Jon: What are they?

Tim: They're the constructor con.

Jon: I'm not up on my Transformers.

Tim: I'm saying John the visionary in Revelation, he uses language and imagery from the prophets from Babylon...

Jon: Oh, he constructs it together? I see.

Tim: ...from Moab, from Tyre and Sidon, from Egypt. He takes all the bad guys of the Bible and makes them into the mega bad guy that he calls Babylon in the book of Revelation. I think the parallels can get out of hand. What I'm interested in is the way John intentionally is creating parallels to talk about the story of God's defeat of evil in the book of Revelation. But anyhow, that's about the book of Revelation.

Jon: Yeah, which a lot of people want us to do.

Tim: The number one requested video that we make is...

Jon: An there will be one in—

Tim: Yeah, I'll be working on in August. Early August is when I'm slated to...

Jon: And then it'll come out in December.

Tim: You're right, it will come out in December. It will be a Christmas present.

Jon: Thanks for listening to this episode of The Bible Project podcast. Just quick note, the Revelation video that Tim was referencing is out and it's available. You can see it on our YouTube page [youtube.com/thebibleproject](https://www.youtube.com/thebibleproject). The video is called "The Day of the Lord." We will release the second Q&R conversation on Exodus next week. Thanks for being a part of this with us.