

March 12th, 2023

The First Plague: River of Blood

Exodus 7:14-25

A purpose for the plagues

We now enter into the most action packed part of the book—the ten plagues. What we need to remember is that there is always a particular point to the signs and wonders that God performs. Jesus’ healing of the man born blind (**John 9:1-7**) was to wonderfully illustrate what He just taught in **John 8:12** “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” Jesus’ cursing of the fig tree causing it to wither (**Matthew 21:18-19**) was to show the impending doom that would fall on Jerusalem in 70 AD (**Matthew 24:32-35**). So these *plagues* as the Psalmist calls them¹ have a very particular purpose. Yahweh did not randomly choose to plague Egypt with these things. He was aiming at something.

The gods of Egypt

Turn with me to **Numbers 33:4**. After their exodus, Moses recounts what God had done: “...while the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn, whom the Lord had struck down among them. *On their gods also the LORD executed judgments.*” These plagues were Yahweh’s overturning of all of Egypt’s gods.² What did Pharaoh say when Moses first confronted him? **Exodus 5:2** “Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and moreover, I will not let Israel go.” As Michael Barrett says here “*The primary point* that God was going to make with [these plagues]...was to address that ignorance; the Egyptians were going to learn that He was Yahweh. Learning who Yahweh was as the one true and living God required putting all

¹ cf. Psalm 78:49-51 w/ Psalm 105:28-26. Also see Zechariah 14:18

² Also see Exodus 12:12; 15:11; 18:11. cf. Isaiah 19:1

other “gods” in their place.”³ But it wasn’t just the Egyptians that needed to learn this, Israel did as well. Israel served Egypt’s gods as much as Egypt.⁴ Israel needed to see that Egypt’s gods were no gods at all. Thus we see again how the Exodus is a paradigm of the gospel. Dear congregation, this is how our salvation *begins*. We don’t *merely* need to be delivered from the bondage of sin. We need to be free from the gods that our hearts love and worship. Salvation *ultimately* is the recapturing of our hearts—the turning “...to God *from idols* to serve the living and true God” (1 Thessalonians 1:9).

★ Blood and the Supremacy of Worship

★ Blood and the Terrible Judgment

★ Blood and the Great Battle

I. Blood and the Supremacy of Worship

Re-orientating ourselves

Recall that last time Aaron threw down the staff of God in Pharaoh’s court and it became a serpent. Pharaoh’s demonic sorcerers did the same, but Aaron’s serpent swallowed up their serpents. But Pharaoh’s heart was still hardened.

What Pharaoh’s hard heart accomplished

And that is how our text begins. Please look with me at 7:14 “Then the LORD said to Moses, “*Pharaoh’s heart is hardened*; he refuses to let the people go.”” This truth is going to be repeated 15 more times. It is absolutely vital to the story. The LORD hardened or strengthened Pharaoh’s heart in his resistance. God did not create this evil disobedience in Pharaoh’s heart, rather He judicially

³ Michael P. V. Barrett, *The Gospel of Exodus: Misery, Deliverance, Gratitude*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Reformation Heritage Books, 2020), pg. 100

⁴ Ezekiel 20:1-10

handed him over to a reprobate mind, withholding the grace that alone could restrain Pharaoh's wickedness. Why is this repetition so important? Because it *means* something for Israel. By hardening Pharaoh's heart, God was prolonging Israel's liberation, which means their suffering would also be prolonged.⁵ But why would God do that? Because there is something infinitely more important than Israel's physical freedom. Hold on to that thought.

A meeting at Pharaoh's altar

God now instructs Moses what to do. Look at v.15 "Go to Pharaoh in the morning, as he is going out to the water. Stand on the bank of the Nile to meet him, and take in your hand the staff that turned into a serpent." Now *why* would Pharaoh go out to the Nile in the morning? Certainly it may have been to bathe as Pharaoh's daughter did in **Exodus 2:5**. But no doubt Pharaoh approaching the Nile was like you and I attending Church on the Lord's Day. The Nile was his altar. All of Egypt "exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator."⁶

The Nile was their life

The Nile was the embodiment, so they thought, of all their strength, power and wealth. In a word, the Nile was their life. If you look at a map of ancient Egypt, every major city is nestled right next to the Nile—Memphis, Sakkara, Amarna, Karnak, Hierakonopolis—every major city finds its home by the Nile.⁷ Why? Because water is the basic element necessary for life. Not only for drinking, bathing, cooking, but the Nile was how their merchants traveled to make wealth, where all their fish came from, it was their wall of defense against enemy intrusion. When the Nile flooded, it irrigated Egypt with every rich minerals and nutrient for abundant fertility in their crop growth.

⁵ "By hardening Pharaoh's heart, Israel's bitter bondage necessarily had to be prolonged--their liberation too must be subsumed under the higher goal of God's glory." L. Michael Morales, *Exodus Old and New: A Biblical Theology of Redemption*, (Downers Grove, IL.: IVP Academic, 2020), pg. 42

⁶ Romans 1:25

⁷ Source: <https://www.worldhistory.org/image/12990/map-of-ancient-egypt/> Accessed March 11, 2023

The Nile was their bloodstream

Children, boys and girls perhaps you've already learned about how your circulatory system works—you know all those arteries that carry your blood? Those arteries carry oxygen, and nutrients to every part of your body. If your circulatory system stopped working, you would die. The Egyptians believed that the Nile was the bloodstream of their god Osiris. The worshipped him and his partner Hapi who was the spirit god of the Nile. Hapi was "...a bearded man with female breasts and a hanging stomach"⁸—probably signifying pregnancy. Isn't it interesting how there is nothing new under the sun? The Egyptians worshiped a 'transgender god.'⁹ And they sang hymns to it:

“Hail to your countenance, Hapi,
Who goes up from the land, who comes to deliver [Egypt]
Who brings food, who is abundant of provisions,
Who creates every sort of his good things...
Everything that has come into being is [through] his power
There is no district of living men without him.”¹⁰

What God requires

This is *why* Pharaoh didn't obey Yahweh: he had his own gods he worshipped. So the LORD tells Moses what to say to him. **v.16** “And you shall say to him, ‘The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you, saying, “Let my people go, *that they may serve me* in the wilderness.” Stop. What does God want from Israel? Their worship. End of **v.16** “But so far, you have not obeyed.” So the stage is set. Yahweh wants his people to worship Him, but Pharaoh refuses because he is worshipping His own god.

⁸ John D. Currid, *Exodus Vol. 1: Chapters 1-18*, (Auburn, MA.: Evangelical Press, 2000), pg. 167

⁹ See this played out today! <https://notthebee.com/article/a-womens-museum-in-denmark-just-put-up-this-statue-and-its-well-i-guess-its-stunning-and-brave>

¹⁰ Currid, pg. 165

Our 1st Principle: worship is the explanation of all world history

That brings us to our **first principle**: *the question of “who will be worshipped?” is the explanation behind every conflict in world history.* This is not a preacher’s hyperbole: the battle over worship is the singular cause behind every war, famine, argument, divorce, crime, rivalry in all the earth.¹¹

Proof #1: Worship is the cause of famines

Why did Elijah prophesy that the rain would stop in Israel for 3 1/2 years? (**1 Kings 17:1**). Because Israel had given themselves over to Baal worship. And God told them in **Deuteronomy 11:16-17** that if they worshiped other Gods, “he [would] shut up the heavens, so that there [would] be no rain.” Natural disasters are not ‘natural’ they are supernatural judgments against idolatry and false worship.¹²

Proof #2: Worship is the cause national calamities

The Biblical explanation for the fall of nations, whether it be God’s covenant people Israel or pagan nations like Babylon, Assyria, and Egypt is

¹¹ Proof: Worship was the cause of the fall men and angels. Why did Eve partake of the forbidden fruit? Because at that moment she turned from worshiping God to *self-worship*. She wanted to be like God (Genesis 3:5), and believed the fruit would make her wise and powerful apart from Him. Why did Satan and the angels fall? *Self-worship*. Isaiah 14:12-13 “How you are fallen from heaven...You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high.’” All sin in the world came from the desire to rob God of His worship. Some runners up: Proof: Worship is the cause of many not confessing Jesus Christ (John 12:42-43). Proof: Worship is the cause of drunkenness (Ephesians 5:18). As Ed Welch says here “Heavy drinkers drink neither to glorify God nor to love their neighbor. They drink to indulge their own desires.” Edward T. Welch, *Additions: A Banquet in the Grave*, (Phillipsburg, NJ.,: P & R Publishing, 2001), pg. 23-24. Proof 36: Worship is the cause of pornography and masturbation.

¹² See Ezekiel 14:12-23. “...the Bible says that God controls the heathen by withholding food and water. To understand the misery of the so-called “Third World,” we need to look first at its ungodly religion and culture. The Edenic blessing of abundance will never be theirs until they repent and believe the Gospel. Christian cultures, on the other hand (especially the countries of the Reformation), are blessed with food that is relatively cheap and abundant. But the Biblical warning is clear: if our nation continues in its apostasy, famine will come, as surely as our rebellious first parents were cast out of Eden. We cannot possess the blessings of the Garden if we live in rebellion against God.” David Chilton, *Paradise Restored: A Biblical Theology of Dominion*, (Horn Lake, MS.,: Dominion Press, 2007), pg. 43-44

because they worshipped other gods. God brings societies to an end because they pollute their land with idol worship (**Jeremiah 16:18**).¹³

Proof #3: Worship is the cause of every argument

Children, boys and girls do you understand what's happening in your heart when you sinfully bicker and fight with your brother or sister? *You are worshipping yourself.* **James 4:1** "What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that *your passions* are at war within you?" Our passion to get our own way is at war with our duty to worship God.

Hortatory Use

The conflict between Moses and Pharaoh, between God and Egypt was a conflict over worship. Dear friends, this is where *every conflict starts*. The Sovereign Lord made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them in order that we might serve Him, obey Him, and love Him. So I exhort you: worship Him. Don't stand in conflict with Him as Pharaoh did. Give your everything to Him, make Him the pursuit of Your life. This is why you exist, it is your chief end. Don't you see? This is *why* God hardened Pharaoh's heart and prolonged Israel's captivity. So that they could taste and see that the Lord is infinitely high above every other God. God hardened Pharaoh's heart *so that* in every plague, Israel could exclaim "there is no one like the LORD our God."¹⁴ The Egyptians worshipped a bearded pregnant man with breasts. What a lesson this is! Every other god is absurd.

The Egyptians trusted in the god of this one river in North Africa. But our God is the God over every river, every sea, every ocean and sea. Heaven is His throne, the earth is His footstool.¹⁵ Before the mountains were brought forth,

¹³ "We need a theological interpretation of disaster, one that recognizes that God acts in such events as captivities, defeats, and crucifixions. The Bible can be interpreted as a string of God's triumphs disguised as disasters." Schlossberg, pg. 304

¹⁴ Exodus 8:10

¹⁵ Isaiah 66:1

before He formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting He has been God.¹⁶ Serve and love Him!

The Egyptians trusted in the Nile to defend them but it couldn't keep them safe from the God of their slaves. Our God is our refuge and strength and He is a very present help even when the earth gives way and the mountains be moved in the heart of sea.¹⁷ Serve and love Him!

The Egyptians trusted in the Nile for their food supply, but our God not only supplies our every need according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus¹⁸, but He is the everlasting feast of our souls. Jesus said "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst" (**John 6:35**). Serve and love Him!

The Egyptians trusted in the Nile for their comfort and it failed them. But in the presence of our God is the fullness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures forevermore.¹⁹ Serve and love Him!

The Egyptians trusted the Nile to maintain life, but our God is life itself. "Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever" (**Psalm 73:25-26**). Serve and love Him!

¹⁶ Psalm 90:2

¹⁷ Psalm 46:1-2

¹⁸ Philippians 4:19

¹⁹ Psalm 16:11

II. Blood and the Terrible Judgment

Why blood?

Please look with me at **v.17-18** “Thus says the LORD, “*By this you shall know that I am the LORD: behold, with the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water that is in the Nile, and it shall turn into blood.*”¹⁸ The fish in the Nile shall die, and the Nile will stink, and the Egyptians will grow weary of drinking water from the Nile.”” ‘By this you shall know that I am the self-existent, eternal, unchangeable God. By this you shall know that the earth is the LORD’s and that your gods are no gods at all.’ The question here is: *why blood?* Why not make the water bitter and undrinkable like the waters at Marah (**Exodus 15:23**)? Why not just cut off the water supply like Elijah did and make the river bone dry (**1 Kings 17:1**)? Why blood? Because God is a just God. The Egyptians shed the blood of Israel’s sons in the Nile (**Exodus 2:22**), so now God turns the Nile into blood. It’s the principle of *lex talionis* where the punishment fits the crime.²⁰

Blood throughout the land

Look at **v.19** “And the LORD said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, “Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, their canals, and their ponds, and all their pools of water, so that they may become blood, and there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, even in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.”” Every drop of water that the Nile supplied in Egypt would turn to blood. Shockingly even the water in their own homes that

²⁰ David Chilton, *The Days of Vengeance: An Exposition of the Book of Revelation*, (Tyler, TX.: Dominion Press, 2011), pg. 401

was kept in wood and stone vessels turned to blood.²¹ Please look at v.20-21 “Moses and Aaron did as the LORD commanded. In the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants he lifted up the staff and struck the water in the Nile, and all the water in the Nile turned into blood. ²¹ And the fish in the Nile died, and the Nile stank, so that the Egyptians could not drink water from the Nile. There was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.”

Excursus: “how to answer a fool”

Children, boys and girls, I was watching a YouTube video that ‘explained’ away this miracle. Some scientists have said this was a phenomenon called ‘red tide’ where water conditions allow red algae to multiply in great numbers and can be toxic to some fish. Others says a volcano had exploded from a nearby island and the volcanic dust which includes the red mineral cinnabar caused this disaster. But what I want you to see is that skeptics reject the account not because the facts say otherwise but rather because their own personal faith says otherwise. Naturalism rests on **the assumption** *that nature is all there is*. Naturalists by faith believe there is no god. So these skeptics who brush aside the Exodus account because it is an article of faith, are doing so because they have faith in a different religion. The fool is not the Christian who believes what God says. The fool is the person who says there is no God. **Psalm 14:1** says “The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.””

The stench and the shutdown

This was a real historical event. All the Nile and all the waters connected to it turned to blood. And it was national crisis. Not only did the hot air fill with

²¹ “The terms ‘buckets’, ‘jars’, and ‘vessels’ etc. supplied by many translations are not found in the Hebrew text. To what, then, do ‘wooden [things] and stone [things] refer? Usually when the terms ‘wood’ and ‘stone’ are employed together they make reference to the physical substance of idols (see, for example, Deut. 28:36, 64; 29:17). Egyptian priests washed the images of gods in water every early morning. Thus, it may be that the water was turning to blood as they poured it on the idols. Perhaps this episode provides another example of mockery at the expense of Egyptian deities.” Currid, pg. 168-169. I have no problem with Currid’s analysis here, but it may be a little beside the point that those terms were supplied in the text. If he’s right, in order for the priests to wash their wood and stone idols, they would have to carry the liquid in their wood and stone vessels.

the stank of dead fish but 300 million cubic meters²² of rotting blood passed by their cities each day. Travel was shut down. Fishing was shut down. Everyone stopped bathing, there was nothing to drink, and their national religion was turned upside down. Phil Ryken compared this event to the fuel shortage that Great Britain faced in September 2000. Because of the high cost of gasoline...

“...truckers conspired to blockade the nation’s oil refineries. Within days the country was nearly at a standstill. There were long lines at the filling stations, where...[fuel was] given times the former price...Reserves ran dangerously low, and Britain was within a day or two of a complete transportation shutdown: no planes, no trains, no automobiles...All because of oil, the lifeblood of the modern state.”

The Nile was ‘the lifeblood’ of Egypt and now that the Nile was *actual blood*, there was a panic in the land.

The sorcerers made it worse

Look at **v.22-23** “But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts.” Stop. Remember these magicians were into the occult. Their secret arts were demonic. Indeed by the power of Satan they were able to duplicate this sign. But as John Currid points out:

“There was a sense of ironic justice about the success of the magicians. They merely succeeded in adding to the plague against their own people. The sorcerers were seemingly unable to reverse the plague brought by God, but could only intensify it.”²³

And it would certainly be intensified because Pharaoh was smugly satisfied in what his witch doctors were about to do so, halfway through **v.22** we read “So

²² Source: <https://www.livescience.com/57023-nile-river-facts.html> Accessed March 11, 2023

²³ Currid, pg. 169

Pharaoh's heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the Lord had said. ²³ Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and he did not take even this to heart.”

The de-creation of Egypt

Look at **v.24-25** “And all the Egyptians dug along the Nile for water to drink, for they could not drink the water of the Nile. *Seven full days* passed after the LORD had struck the Nile.” Just as creation week was 7 days, so these 7 days of blood seem to suggest that Egypt is undergoing de-creation.²⁴

Our 2nd principle: God will remove all blessing

That brings us to our **second principle**: *those who refuse to worship the LORD will in the end have all the blessings of this life removed from them.* This earthly plague that fell on Egypt is but a shadow of the eternal plague. When God judges those who refuse to Him worship at the Last Day, all their comforts will be taken away. Consider...

No relief

During the plague in Egypt, they could find some water for relief, but in during the plague in eternity not a drop of water can be found for comfort.²⁵ The rich and called out to Abraham in **Luke 16:24** “Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.”

No escape

This plague was located only in Egypt, conceivably one could have left and found relief, but on that Day there is no escape for the wicked. Abraham told the rich man in **Luke 16:26** “...between us and you a great chasm has

²⁴ cf. Morales, pg. 44-45

²⁵ “...it seems the that the flame was not only about him, but in him.” Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Vol. 2*, (Carlisle, PA.,: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2009), pg. 881

been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.”

The greatest misery

The plague in Egypt caused them a great misery, but on that Day the wicked will suffer a misery they have never known. **Matthew 13:49-50** “So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

An eternal crisis

The plague in Egypt was only a national crisis that lasted 7 days, but the plague for the wicked is an eternal crisis that never comes to an end. As Edwards says here “There is no reckoning up the millions of years or millions of ages; all arithmetic here fails, no rules of multiplication can reach the amount, for there is no end.”²⁶ The door of mercy is forever shut. **Revelation 14:11** “And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night.”

Summa Theologica

The river of blood is a foreshadow of the river of anguish and terror and eternal death where the worm does not die and the flame is not extinguished. All this will come to pass on the Pharaohs and the Egyptians of this world who refuse to worship the Lord of Earth and Heaven. The Egyptians had their comforts taken away for a week, but the wicked will have their comforts taken away forever, world without end.

Admonitory Use

Dear friend, if that is you, if you do not acknowledge the LORD—Yahweh—as God over every God, as the God that you own for self, that you trust

²⁶ *Ibid*, pg. 883

personally trust and love and cling to, then be warned. Don't you know that these things are recorded as warnings? Just as time ran out for the Egyptians, so time will run out for you very soon. Today's Scripture is God's kindness to you, that you would turn to Him in repentance, so that you would not suffer the fate of eternal separation and anguish. He does not delight in the death of the wicked. But He will not be mocked, He is a holy and just God, and if you will not worship Him and obey Him, He will execute judgement. Turn away from the false worship that you have been offering to whatever Nile River you have looked too for comfort, satisfaction, security, power, or pleasure. Turn to the Living God who made Heaven and Earth. He alone can satisfy you. He alone can comfort you. He alone can save you from the wrath to come. He calls out to you today "Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other."²⁷

III. Blood and the Great Battle

The problem that bothered me in this text

What I couldn't figure out in this text was whether God's people also suffered from this plague. It's not until the 4th plague where God specifically says in **8:22** "But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where my people dwell..." and no plague will come there. Does that mean Israel shared in these first three plagues? At this point, I'm not sure. Some commentators say yes, others no. Let's suppose though, that they did share in the sufferings of these plagues. That's no different than God's people today. Our country has come under God's judgment, and there are Christians here. How do we sort this out?

²⁷ Isaiah 45:22

Saving us from our gods

Well, just like Israel served Egypt's gods, many Christians—like you and me—have been tempted by the gods of this age. We've often put our trust and hope in the things other than the Living God. Our hearts can rise and sink based on the headlines. God delivered Israel from their hoping in Egypt's gods through these plagues. Likewise as the Lord is pouring out His judgments—His plagues—in our world today, He is delivering our hearts from the world's gods that we have hoped in. Whatever temporal judgment that you or I might face, it is not for our harm. It is for our deliverance. God is fighting for us.

Our 3rd Principle: The God who fights for us

That brings us to our **third principle**: *In all His judgments, the Triune God is always fighting on behalf of people.* We will face hardship. But the difference between the hardship and the hardship the Egyptians face is that God's fight is not against us. God's fight is against those who worship other gods and who oppress His people. Consider the promises from Scripture.

The promise to Abraham

When God covenanted with Abraham, and you were joined to that covenant the moment you hoped in Christ, He promised "I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you." (**Genesis 12:3**). Egypt came under God's curse because they cursed God's people. Has God changed? No He still curses nations today who curse His people. Our God fights for us.

That's what Moses told Israel when they left Egypt. **Deuteronomy 1:30** "The Lord your God who goes before you will himself fight for you, just as he did for you in Egypt before your eyes."

That's what the prophet told King Jehoshaphat when the Moabites and Ammonites came against them. **2 Chronicles 20:17** "You will not need to fight in this battle. Stand firm, hold your position, and see the salvation of the Lord on

your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.’ Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed. Tomorrow go out against them, and the Lord will be with you.”

That’s what Paul tells us today. **Romans 8:31-32** “What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?” He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?”

There Is a Fountain Filled With Blood

Loved ones, don’t you see? That river of blood ultimately was working Israel’s salvation. William Cowper (1731-1800) suffered tremendously from despair and depression all his life. However during his time of “plague” he wrote one of His most beloved songs: *There is A Fountain Filled With Blood*.

There is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Emmanuel’s veins
And sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains
Lose all their guilty stains, lose all their guilty stains
And sinner plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains

Cowper understood something very deeply in His despair. Jesus Christ—our Emmanuel—became the plague for us. He became that river of blood upon the cross. **Zechariah 13:1** “On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness.” Just as the Egyptians were powerless against that river of blood, so you too dear child of God are powerless against the cleansing power of Jesus blood.

The gods you have worshipped have sunk down into the abyss.
The sins you have committed have been drowned in the depths.
Your iniquities have been swallowed up in the crimson deep.

And just as that river of blood lasted 7 days—the number of complete perfection—so the blood of Jesus Christ has completely and perfectly cleansed you. You were plunged in the crimson flood of Jesus' blood, and you have come out as white as snow. Oh loved ones, don't weary yourself by digging like the Egyptians did at the Nile. Behold that river of blood. See in that blood the breadth and length and height and depth of the love of Christ. See in that blood your perfect atonement before the Father in Heaven. There is no need to despair of the stench of that blood as the Egyptians did, for it is an aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved. Yes to those who are perishing it is the fragrance of death. But to you dear child of God, it is a fragrance of life to life. Christ's blood, the precious river, that fount filled from Emmanuel's veins is where you were plunged, it is where you lost all your guilt stains.