

Chinese Martyrs Catholic Church
Bible Sharing Program 2009-10
Exodus #3: “Let My People Go ... to Celebrate a Festival”

TGQ = Tim Gray Study Set Questions
TGR = Tim Gray Study Set Responses
TGCD = Tim Gray CD Set
NJBC = New Jerome Biblical Commentary
FATHER = A Father Who Keeps His Promises
HO = Special Handout
SK = Sze Go Chinese Bible

A	<p><u>Introduction of related scriptural passages</u></p> <p>“Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening”</p>	<p>Ex 5-7</p> <p>1Sam 3:9</p>
B	<p><u>The History and Religion as well as the Influence of Egypt on Israel</u></p>	<p>Research Materials</p>
C	<p><u>Moses Implored Pharaoh to Release the Israelites and Offered a Sacrifice to God</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why would God want the Israelites to leave Egypt and worship Him in the wilderness? God wants the Israelites to offer cattle (cows and sheep) because these animals are symbols of the Egyptian gods. God wants the Israelites to slaughter these cattle in order to purge their poor habits of worshipping idols. This reveals that God also wants us to purge our worship of money, sex, and power. • God originally intends to give spiritual freedom instead of political freedom to the Israelites. • “I do not know the Lord”, note the theme of “knowing” (YADA). In this incident, the self-proclaimed god, Pharaoh, feels threatened by another God. • The theme of “work” (AVAD) reflects the conflict between Pharaoh and Moses: should God’s people AVAD (work, slavery) for Pharaoh (self-proclaimed god), or AVAD (worship, freedom) for God (the true God)? Are they the servants of Pharaoh or God? This is a choice we must also make. • Just as the Snake who perceives God’s commandment as a “lie” (Gen 3:1), those who disrespect human dignity through slavery, i.e., Pharaoh and capitalists, believe that serving God is also a “lie”. • Following God’s will and serving Him does not exempt us from suffering; Mary and Jesus are solid proof of this. We must remember the meaning of suffering and not lose heart in crisis. We must not stop hoping in God’s promise. • The tribe of Moses and Aaron belongs to the Priestly scripture, the focus is in the priesthood of Levi. 	<p>Ex 5-6</p> <p>TGR3-1b</p> <p>Father, p 152</p> <p>Ex 5:2, TGR3-2b</p> <p>TGQ15, TGR3-3, 4a, HO1</p> <p>Ex 5:9, TGR3-3 cf. JP11 Laborem Exercens, 7</p> <p>Ex 5:20-6:9TGR3-5</p> <p>NJBC</p>
D	<p><u>The Might of God</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The transformation to “snake” is written as “transformation to crocodile” in the original writings – the Egyptian god “SOBEK”, whose job is to protect the River Nile and the Pharaoh. Moses’ crocodile swallows the crocodile of Pharaoh’s magician symbolizes the Israelites’ God triumphs over the Pharaoh’s and Egyptian god. • The first nine disasters can be categorized into three groups and each group consists of three similar disasters. Each group has its own significance. • First Disaster – river turns to blood: River Nile represents the source of life for Egyptians and is ruled by the god Hapi. The river’s water turning to blood symbolizes God actually controls everything and the blood also represents Pharaoh’s brutality of killing all male infants of the Israelites. • Moses’ act of turning water into blood prefigures Jesus turning water into wine. 	<p>Ex 7</p> <p>Ex 7:7-13, TGR 3-8</p> <p>NJBC 3:17, HO2</p> <p>Ex 7:14-24 TGR3-8</p> <p>Father p 137</p> <p>Jn 2:1-11</p> <p>TGR4-2</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Disaster: Frog is the image of the Egyptian god, HEQET, symbolizes fertility. The frogs, symbol of fertility, jumping out from the Nile that buries the male infants of the Israelites, become the source of the curse. • God hardens Pharaoh's heart = people have no freedom? This could be interpreted as "God allows Pharaoh's heart to harden". It is mentioned many times in Scripture that Pharaoh chooses to harden his heart, not forced by God. 	<p>Father p 138 TGQ17 NJBC 3:16</p>
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"Work is in the first place for the worker, and not the worker for work. This is a reversal of the order laid down in the book of Genesis. The worker is treated as a tool whereas the worker ought to be treated as the subject of work, as its maker and creator." (JPII, Laborem Exercens, 6-7)

The Structure of the Ten Disasters

<u>"Go to Pharaoh in the morning, as he is going out to the water; stand by at the river bank to meet him" (7:15, 8:16, 9:13)</u>	<u>1st Disaster: Blood</u>	<u>4th Disaster: Gnats</u>	<u>7th Disaster: Thunder & Hail</u>
<u>Give warnings to Pharaoh at his court (7:25, 9:1, 10:1)</u>	<u>2nd Disaster: Frogs</u>	<u>5th Disaster: Deadly pestilence on livestock</u>	<u>8th Disaster: Locusts</u>
<u>Command Moses and Aaron to begin the disaster</u>	<u>3rd Disaster: Flies</u>	<u>6th Disaster: Boils</u>	<u>9th Disaster: Darkness</u>
<u>The message of each group of disasters</u>	<u>The excellence of God and His messenger (7:17, 8:18)</u>	<u>God covers the earth to protect His people (9:4, 6)</u>	<u>All-powerful God (9:18,24, 10:6, 14)</u>