

The Exodus

This Night Has Twenty Minutes

Adaptation of Exodus 3-14.
An account of God's deliverance

Cast	
<i>YHWH</i>	<i>Moses</i>
<i>Pharaoh</i>	<i>Narrator3</i>
<i>Narrator</i>	<i>Narrator4</i>
<i>Narrator2</i>	<i>All/Chorus</i>

Narrator:

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush and explained his plans to free the Israelites from Egyptian slavery.

YHWH: (*From behind the flaming bush*)

I AM WHO I AM. Say to the Israelites: `I AM has sent me to you.

The LORD, the God of your fathers--the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob--has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation.

The elders of Israel will listen to you. Then you and the elders must go to the king of Egypt and say, `The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. And we must take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God.'

But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless a mighty hand compels him.

So I will stretch out my hand and strike the Egyptians with all the wonders that I will perform. After that, he will let you go.

And I will make the Egyptians give gifts to the people, so that when you leave you will not go empty-handed.

Every woman is to ask her neighbour for items of silver or gold and for clothing, which you will give to your sons and daughters.

Narrator 2:

It took some miracles to convince Moses that the Lord was serious but finally Moses agreed to go.

YHWH:

When you return to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders I have given you the power to do. But I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go.

Then say to Pharaoh, `this is what the LORD says: Israel is my firstborn son; Let my son go, so that he may worship me. For if you refuse to let him go; so I will kill your firstborn son.'

Narrator 3:

Now, the LORD had said to Aaron, "Go into the desert to meet Moses." So he met Moses at the mountain of God and kissed him.

Then Moses told Aaron everything the LORD said, and also about all the miraculous signs he was to perform.

Moses and Aaron gathered all the elders of the Israelites, and Aaron told them everything.

He also performed the signs before the people, and they believed. And when they heard that the LORD was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshipped. Afterwards Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh.

Moses:

This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: `Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the desert.'

Pharaoh:

Who is the LORD that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD and I will not let Israel go.

Moses:

The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Now let us take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God, or he may strike us with plagues or with the sword.

Pharaoh:

Moses and Aaron, why are you taking the people away from their labour? Get back to your work! And let them go and gather their own straw. But require them to make the same number of bricks as before; don't reduce the quota. They are lazy; that is why they are crying out, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.'

Narrator 4:

So the people scattered all over Egypt to gather stubble to use for straw. The Israelite foremen appointed by Pharaoh's slave drivers were beaten and were asked, "Why didn't you meet your quota of bricks yesterday or today, as before?"

This made the lives of the Israelites even harder than before so their discouragement was even greater. So God spoke to Moses.

YHWH:

Moses, go back, and tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites go.

Narrator:

Moses was eighty years old and Aaron eighty-three when they spoke to Pharaoh. So Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD commanded. When they threw the staff down in front of Pharaoh and his officials it became a snake.

(Hiss)

Then Pharaoh summoned the wise men, sorcerers, and magicians. Each one threw down his staff and it became a snake. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs.

(Gulping sound)

Chorus: But Pharaoh's heart became hard and he would not listen, just as the LORD had said.

YHWH:

Pharaoh refuses to let the people go.

So, go to Pharaoh in the morning. Wait on the bank of the Nile to meet him, and take in your staff.

Then say to him, `The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me in the desert.

Narrator 2:

Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD commanded. He raised his staff in the presence of Pharaoh and his officials and struck the water of the Nile, and all the water was changed into blood. The fish died, and the Egyptians could not drink the water.

All: *Oh yuck! This water is disgusting*

Narrator 2:

But the Egyptian magicians did the same things by their secret arts, and Pharaoh's heart became hard; he would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the LORD had said.

Seven days later God instructed Moses.

YHWH:

Go to Pharaoh and say, the LORD says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me.

If you refuse to let them go, I will plague your whole country with frogs.

Narrator 3:

So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and frogs covered the land.

All: *Frog sounds*

Narrator 3:

But the magicians did the same things by their secret arts.

Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron.

Pharaoh:

Pray to the LORD to take the frogs away from me and my people, and I will let your people go to offer sacrifices to the LORD."

Moses:

I leave to you the honour of setting the time for me to pray that you may be rid of the frogs.

Pharaoh:

Tomorrow.

Moses:

It will be as you say, so that you may know there is no one like the LORD our God. The frogs will leave you and they will remain only in the Nile.

Narrator 4:

After Moses and Aaron left Pharaoh, Moses cried out to the LORD about the frogs and the frogs died. They were piled into heaps, and the land reeked.

Chorus: But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart just as the LORD had said.

YHWH:

Tell Aaron, 'Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the ground,' and throughout the land of Egypt the dust will become gnats.

Narrator:

They did this, and when Aaron stretched out his hand with the staff and struck the dust of the ground, gnats swarmed over men and animals. All the dust in the land of Egypt became gnats.

All: People making slapping sounds and saying 'ouch'

Narrator:

But when the magicians tried to produce gnats by their secret arts, they could not. The magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God."

Chorus: But Pharaoh's heart was hard and he would not listen, just as the LORD had said.

YHWH:

Get up early in the morning and confront Pharaoh as he goes to the water and say to him, `this is what the LORD says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me. If you do not let my people go, I will send swarms of flies on you.

But on that day I will deal differently with the land of Goshen, where my people live; no swarms of flies will be there, so that you will know that I, the LORD, am in this land.

I will make a distinction between my people and your people. This miraculous sign will occur tomorrow.

Narrator 2: And the LORD did this and throughout Egypt the flies ruined the land.

All: Sound of many fly swatters

Narrator 2:

Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron.

Pharaoh:

Go, sacrifice to your God here in the land.

Moses:

That would not be right. The sacrifices we offer the LORD our God would be detestable to the Egyptians. And if we offer sacrifices that are detestable in their eyes, will they not stone us?

We must take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God, as he commands us.

Pharaoh:

I will let you go to offer sacrifices to the LORD your God in the desert, but you must not go very far. Now pray for me.

Moses:

As soon as I leave you, I will pray to the LORD, and tomorrow the flies will leave Pharaoh and his officials and his people. Only be sure that Pharaoh does not act deceitfully again by not letting the people go.

Narrator 3:

Moses left Pharaoh and prayed to the LORD, and the LORD did what Moses asked: The flies left Pharaoh and his officials and his people; not a fly remained.

Chorus: But this time also Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not let the people go.

YHWH:

Go to Pharaoh and say to him, `this is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: "Let my people go, so that they may worship me. If you refuse to let them go and continue to hold them back, the hand of the LORD will bring a terrible plague on your livestock in the field--on your horses and donkeys and camels and on your cattle and sheep and goats. But the LORD will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and that of Egypt, so that no animal belonging to the Israelites will perish.

All: Sound of mooing cows and bleating sheep then silence

Narrator 4:

And the next day the LORD did it:

All the livestock of the Egyptians died, so Pharaoh sent men to investigate and found that not even one of the animals of the Israelites had died.

The Exodus: This Night has Twenty Minutes

Chorus: *But this time also Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not let the people go.*

YHWH:

Take handfuls of soot from a furnace and have Moses toss it into the air in the presence of Pharaoh. It will become fine dust over the whole land of Egypt, and festering boils will break out on men and animals throughout the land.

Narrator:

So they took soot from a furnace and stood before Pharaoh. Moses tossed it into the air, and festering boils broke out on men and animals.

All: *Scratching, scraping, moaning sounds*

Narrator:

The magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils that were on them.

Chorus: *But this time also God hardened Pharaoh's heart and he would not let the people go.*

YHWH:

Moses, get up early in the morning, confront Pharaoh and say to him, `This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me, or this time I will send the full force of my plagues against you and against your officials and your people, so you may know that there is no-one like me in all the earth. I alone am God!

But I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.

Moses:

The Lord says, At this time tomorrow I will send the worst hailstorm that has ever fallen on Egypt, from the day it was founded till now.

Give an order now to bring your livestock and everything you have in the field to a place of shelter, because the hail will fall on every man and animal that has not been brought in and is still out in the field, and they will die.

Narrator 2:

Those officials of Pharaoh who feared the word of the LORD hurried to bring their slaves and their livestock inside.

But those who ignored the word of the LORD left their slaves and livestock in the field.

Then Moses stretched out his staff towards the sky, and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and lightning. It was the worst storm in all the land of Egypt since it had become a nation.

All: *Thunder, crashing sounds*

Narrator 2:

The only place it did not hail was in the land of Goshen, where the Israelites were safe with their animals. Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron.

Pharaoh:

This time I have sinned. The LORD is in the right, and my people and I are in the wrong.

Pray to the LORD, for we have had enough thunder and hail. I will let you go; you don't have to stay any longer.

Moses:

When I have gone out of the city, I will spread out my hands in prayer to the LORD. The thunder will stop and there will be no more hail, so you may know that the earth is the LORD's.

But I know that you and your officials still do not fear the LORD God.

Narrator 3:

When Moses left Pharaoh and went out of the city, he spread out his hands towards the LORD; the thunder and hail stopped, and the rain no longer poured down on the land.

Chorus: *But Pharaoh's heart was hard and he would not let the Israelites go.*

Moses:

Pharaoh, this is what the LORD says: `How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go, and worship me.

If you refuse to let them go, I will bring locusts tomorrow that will cover the face of the ground so that it cannot be seen. They will devour what little you have left after the hail!

All: *How long will this man be a snare to us?
Let the people go, to worship the LORD their God.
Do you not yet realize that Egypt is ruined?*

Pharaoh:

Go, worship the LORD your God. But just who will be going?"

Moses:

We will go with our young and old, with our sons and daughters, and with our flocks and herds, because we are to celebrate a festival to the LORD."

Pharaoh:

The LORD had better be with you—

if I let you go, along with your women and children!

Clearly you are bent on evil.

No! Let only the men go; and worship the LORD, since that's what you have been asking for. Now get out of my sight!

Narrator 4:

So Moses and Aaron went out and Moses stretched out his staff over Egypt, and the LORD made an east wind blow across the land all that day and all that night. By morning the wind had brought the locusts.

All: Sound of whirring wings

Narrator 4:

Never before had there been such a plague of locusts, nor will there ever be again.

Pharaoh quickly summoned Moses and Aaron.

Pharaoh:

I have sinned against the LORD your God and against you.

Now forgive my sin once more,

and pray to the LORD your God

to take this deadly plague away from me.

Narrator:

Moses then left Pharaoh and prayed to the LORD.

And the LORD changed the wind to a very strong west wind, which caught up the locusts and carried them into the Red Sea.

Chorus: But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart. He did not let the Israelites go.

Narrator:

Then the LORD told Moses to stretch his hand towards the sky so that darkness will spread over Egypt-- darkness that could be felt.

So Moses stretched out his hand towards the sky, and total darkness covered all Egypt for three days.

All: Creepy, very, very, creepy.

The Exodus: This Night has Twenty Minutes

Narrator:

No one could see anyone else or leave his place for three days. Yet all the Israelites had light in the places where they lived.

Then Pharaoh summoned Moses.

Pharaoh:

Go, worship the LORD. Even your women and children may go with you; only leave your flocks and herds behind.

Moses:

You must allow us to have sacrifices and burnt offerings to present to the LORD our God.

Our livestock must go with us; not a hoof is to be left behind. We have to use some of them in worshipping the LORD our God, and until we get there we will not know what we are to use to worship the LORD.

Chorus: But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart. He did not let the Israelites go.

Pharaoh:

Get out of my sight! Make sure you do not appear before me again! The day you see my face you will die!

Moses:

Just as you say I will never appear before you again. But know that this is what the LORD says: `About midnight I will go throughout Egypt. Every firstborn son in Egypt will die, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh, who sits on the throne, to the firstborn son of the slave girl, who is at her hand mill, and all the firstborn of the cattle as well.

There will be loud wailing throughout Egypt--worse than there has ever been or ever will be again.

But among the Israelites not a dog will bark at any man or animal. Then you will know that the LORD makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel. All these officials of yours will come to me, bowing down before me and saying, `Go, you and all the people who follow you!'

After that I will leave.

The Exodus: This Night has Twenty Minutes

Narrator 2:

Then Moses, hot with anger, left Pharaoh.

YHWH:

Tell the people that men and women alike are to ask their neighbours for articles of silver and gold.

Pharaoh has refused to listen to you—and now I will show my wonders to all in Egypt.

Narrator 3:

Then God told Moses how the people were to keep the Passover.

On the fourteenth day of the month at twilight all the people were to kill the Passover lamb and put its blood on the doorposts and lintel.

That same night they were to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. They were not to leave any of it until the morning. With their cloaks tucked into their belts, their sandals on their feet and their staffs in their hands they must eat it in haste; it was the LORD's Passover. Then God told Moses what he would do.

YHWH:

On this night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn--both men and animals--and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the LORD.

The blood will be a sign for you. When I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.

This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD--forever.

Narrator 4:

Then Moses summoned all the elders of Israel and told them to go at once and select the animals for their families and slaughter the Passover lamb and put some of the blood on the door.

Moses:

Now go. Obey these instructions. In the future, when you are in the Promised Land and your children ask, `What does this ceremony mean? Tell them, `It is the Passover to the LORD, who passed over the houses of the Israelites and spared our homes when He struck down the Egyptians.

Narrator:

The people bowed down and worshipped. Then they did just what the LORD commanded and at midnight the LORD struck down all the firstborn in Egypt, and there was loud wailing in Egypt.

All: *Wailing, ululate*

Narrator:

There was not a house without someone dead.
During the night Pharaoh sent this message to Moses and Aaron.

All: Up! Leave Egypt, you and all the Israelites!
Go, worship the LORD as you have requested.
Take your flocks and herds, as you have said, and go. And also bless me!
Hurry and leave the country. For otherwise, we will all die!

Narrator 2:

So the people took their dough before it was leavened, and carried it on their shoulders in kneading troughs.
The Egyptians had given them gold and silver and precious things.
The Israelites journeyed from Ramses to Succoth. There were about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children.
At the end of the 430 years, to the very day, all the LORD's divisions left Egypt, because the LORD kept vigil that night to bring them out of Egypt.

On this night all the Israelites are to keep vigil to honour the LORD for all generations to come.