

This week as we finish up the **plagues**, we are reminded of the fact that they were **designed to reveal the powerlessness of Egypt's many gods**, while at the same time showcasing the **supremacy of יהוה**, the **Elohim of the Israelites**. Each plague was **designed to eliminate their trust in a specific god**:

1. **Hapi** – the god of the river (plague of **blood**)
2. **Heqt** – the frog-faced goddess (plague of **frogs**)
3. **Seb** – the earth god (plague of **lice**)
4. **Khepfi** – the god of insects (plague of **swarms of flies**)
5. **Hathor** – the cow-faced goddess (**livestock** smitten)
6. **Imhotep** – the deity of medicine (plague of **boils**)
7. **Nut** – the sky goddess (plague of **hail and fire**)
8. **Seth** – the protector of fields and produce (plague of **locusts**)
9. **Horus/Ra** – the son god (plague of **darkness**)
10. **Amon-Ra** – the creator god (**death of the firstborn**)

The 10<sup>th</sup> god, **Amon-Ra**, became the focus of the most complex system of theology in **ancient Egypt**. The name **Amon** means “**the hidden one**” or “**the secret one**”. **Amon** was said to be **self-created, without mother or father**. As the “**hidden one**”, he was **associated with the air**, which is an **invisible source**. According to **Egyptian mythology**, his **real name and his physical appearance were unknown**, thus indicating **his unknowable essence**. He was described as “**lord of truth, father of the gods, maker of men, creator of all animals, lord of things that are, creator of the staff of life.**”

**Ancient theology** understood **Amon-Ra** to be the **physical father of the Pharaoh**. The **Pharaoh and Amon-Ra** enjoyed a **symbiotic relationship**, with the **Pharaoh deriving power from Amon-Ra**; and in return, the **Pharaoh supporting the temples and worship of the deity**.

**Amon-Ra** was even **believed to be able to take the form of the Pharaoh** in order to **impregnate the royal wife**. To the right is pictured a **bas-relief of Amon-Ra as Pharaoh**. Thus we **understand the significance of the killing of the 1<sup>st</sup> born son of Egypt** who also would have been seen as a **son of Amon-Ra!**



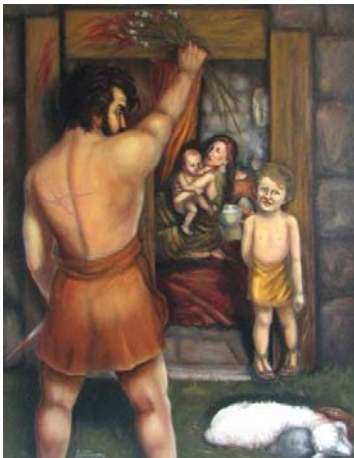
The **two temples** built in **dedication to Amon-Ra** were at **Luxor and Karnak**. As far as I can tell through my on-line research, there were **yearly festivals** occurring during the time of the **Israelite's slavery in Egypt**. The **festivals were to reconcile the human aspect of the ruler with the divine office**. The **journey was made by the royal family to Thebes** by way of the **Nile River**. **Large crowds accompanied the barge by walking along the banks of the river**. Once at the **temple**, the **Pharaoh and his priests entered the back chambers**. There, the **Pharaoh and his ka** (the **divine essence of each Pharaoh, created at his birth**) were **merged** - the **Pharaoh being transformed into a divine being**. The **crowd outside, anxiously awaiting the transformed Pharaoh, would cheer wildly at his re-emergence**. This **solidified the ritual and made the Pharaoh a god**. The **festival was the backbone of the Pharaoh's government**. This meant **one of the same bloodline must become the next ruler over Egypt...i.e. the first-born...the very one killed by the final plague!**

Now, imagine the **scene** at the time of the **first Passover**. From the **Egyptian's viewpoint** - the **lamb**...known as the **sacred animal used by Amon-Ra to protect the Pharaoh** was slaughtered, its very **blood painted around the doorways** of the **Israelite homes**.

The **aroma** of these **roasted lambs** would have been **intense** in the **surrounding Egyptian community** leading up to the **visit of the destroying angel!** Soon the **1<sup>st</sup> born son of the Pharaoh...from Amon-Ra, himself...dead!** **יהוה** **has made His point!**



*Jeremiah 46:25 יהוה of hosts, the Elohim of Israel, says: "Behold, I will bring punishment on **Amon** of No, and **Pharaoh and Egypt, with their gods and their kings -- Pharaoh and those who trust in him.**"*



Now from **Israel's point of view** – it took **faith** to follow the **Almighty's instructions**. **Killing the sacred animal of Amon-Ra could surely lead to their deaths**. In fact, according to **Ezekiel**, it was highly **possible** that **many Israelites** were even **intimate with Amon-Ra worship**. If so, they would have to **choose between Amon-Ra and יהוה!**

*Ezekiel 20:7 "Then I said to them, 'Each of you, **throw away the abominations which are before his eyes, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt. I am יהוה** your Elohim.'*

The **Father** is **still eager** to **purify His people** from everything connected to **pagan worship**. **Holiness and obedience** is to be pursued!

**Shabbat Shalom!**

*Ardelle*

**Avenue leading up to Ledor temple dedicated to Amon-Ra, protected by sphinxes with ram's heads.**

