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EXODUS 11:1 The LORD said to Moses, "Yet one plague more will I bring on Pharaoh, and on Egypt; afterwards he will let you go. When he lets you go, he will surely thrust you out altogether."

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God purposes to bring another plague upon Pharaoh, after which he should let the Israelites go, Exo 11:1. They are commanded to ask gold and silver from the Egyptians, Exo 11:2. The estimation in which Moses was held among the Egyptians, Exo 11:3. Moses predicts the destruction of the first-born of the Egyptians, Exo 11:4-6, and Israel's protection, Exo 11:7. On seeing which, Pharaoh and his servants should entreat the Hebrews to depart, Exo 11:8. The prediction of his previous obstinacy, Exo 11:9, Exo 11:10.

#### Verse 1

The Lord said unto Moses - Calmet contends that this should be read in the preterpluperfect tense, for the Lord Had said to Moses, as the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth verses appear to have been spoken when Moses had the interview with Pharaoh mentioned in the preceding chapter; see Clarke's note on Exo 10:29. If therefore this chapter be connected with the preceding, as it should be, and the first three verses not only read in the past tense but also in a parenthesis, the sense will be much more distinct and clear than it now appears.

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EXODUS 11:2 Speak now in the ears of the people, and let them ask every man of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold."

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#### Verse 2

Let every man borrow - For a proper correction of the strange mistranslation of the word שאל shaal in this verse, see Clarke's note on Exo 3:22.

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EXODUS 11:3 The LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people.

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#### Verse 3

The man Moses was very great - The miracles which Pharaoh and his servants had already seen him work had doubtless impressed them with a high opinion of his wisdom and power. Had he not appeared in their sight as a very extraordinary person, whom it would have been very dangerous to molest, we may naturally conclude that some violence would long ere this have been offered to his person.

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EXODUS 11:4 Moses said, "This is what the LORD says: 'About midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt,

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 Verse 4

About midnight will I go out - Whether God did this by the ministry of a good or of an evil angel is a matter of little importance, though some commentators have greatly magnified it. Both kinds of angels are under his power and jurisdiction, and he may employ them as he pleases. Such a work of destruction as the slaying of the first-born is supposed to be more proper for a bad than for a good angel. But the works of God's justice are not less holy and pure than the works of his mercy; and the highest archangel may, with the utmost propriety, be employed in either.

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EXODUS 11:5 and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the female servant who is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of livestock.

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 Verse 5

The first-born of Pharaoh, etc. - From the heir to the Egyptian throne to the son of the most abject slave, or the principal person in each family. See Clarke's note on Exo 12:29.

The maid-servant that is behind the mill - The meanest slaves were employed in this work. In many parts of the east they still grind all their corn with a kind of portable mill-stones, the upper one of which is turned round by a sort of lever fixed in the rim. A drawing of one of these machines as used in China is now before me, and the person who grinds is represented as pushing the lever before him, and thus running round with the stone. Perhaps something like this is intended by the expression Behind the mill in the text. On this passage Dr. Shaw has the following observation: - "Most families grind their wheat and barley at home, having two portable mill-stones for that purpose, the uppermost of which is turned round by a small handle of wood or iron that is placed in the rim. When this stone is large, or expedition required, a second person is called in to assist; and as it is usual for women alone to be concerned in this employment, who seat themselves over against each other with the mill-stone between them, we may see, not only the propriety of the expression (Exo 11:5) of sitting behind the mill, but the force of another, (Mat 24:41), that two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left." - Travels, p. 231, 4th edit. These portable mills, under the name of querns, were used among our ancestors in this and the sister kingdoms, and some of them are in use to the present day. Both the instrument and its name our forefathers seem to have borrowed from the continent. They have long existed among the inhabitants of Shetland, Iceland, Norway, Denmark, etc.

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EXODUS 11:6 There shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there has not been, nor shall be any more.

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 Verse 6

There shall be a great cry - Of the dying and for the dead. See more on this subject, Exo 12:30 (note).

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EXODUS 11:7 But against any of the children of Israel a dog won't even bark or move its tongue, against man or animal; that you may know that the LORD makes a distinction between the Egyptians and Israel.

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#### Verse 7

Not a dog move his tongue - This passage has been generally understood as a proverbial expression, intimating that the Israelites should not only be free from this death, but that they should depart without any kind of molestation. For though there must be much bustle and comparative confusion in the sudden removal of six hundred thousand persons with their wives, children, goods, cattle, etc., yet this should produce so little alarm that even the dogs should not bark at them, which it would be natural to expect, as the principal stir was to be about midnight.

After giving this general explanation from others, I may be permitted to hazard a conjecture of my own. And,

1. Is it not probable that the allusion is here made to a well-known custom of dogs howling when any mortality is in a village, street, or even house, where such animals are? There are innumerable instances of the faithful house-dog howling when a death happens in a family, as if distressed on the account, feeling for the loss of his benefactor; but their apparent presaging such an event by their cries, as some will have it, may be attributed, not to any prescience, but to the exquisite keenness of their scent. If the words may be understood in this way, then the great cry through the whole land of Egypt may refer to this very circumstance: as dogs were sacred among them, and consequently religiously preserved, they must have existed in great multitudes.

2. We know that one of their principal deities was Osiris, whose son, worshipped under the form of a dog, or a man with a dog's head, was called Anubis latrator, the barking Anubis. May he not be represented as deploring a calamity which he had no power to prevent among his worshippers, nor influence to inflict punishment upon those who set his deity at naught? Hence while there was a great cry, צעקה גדלה tseakah gedolah, throughout all the land of Egypt, because of the mortality in every house, yet among the Israelites there was no death, consequently no dog moved his tongue to howl for their calamity; nor could the object of the Egyptians' worship inflict any similar punishment on the worshippers of Jehovah.

In honor of this dog-god there was a city called Anubis in Egypt, by the Greeks called Cynopolis, the city of the dog, the same that is now called Menich; in this he had a temple, and dogs, which were sacred to him, were here fed with consecrated victuals.

Thus, as in the first plagues their magicians were confounded, so in this last their gods were put to flight. And may not this be referred to in Exo 12:12, when Jehovah says: Against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment? Should it be objected, that to consider the passage in this light would be to acknowledge the being and deity of the fictitious Anubis, it may be answered, that in the sacred writings it is not an uncommon thing to see the idol acknowledged in order to show its nullity, and the more forcibly to express contempt for it, for its worshippers, and for its worship. Thus Isaiah represents the Babylonish idols as being endued with sense, bowing down under the judgments of God, utterly unable to help themselves or their worshippers, and being a burden to the beasts that carried them:

Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth; their idols were upon the beasts and upon the cattle: your carriages were heavy laden; they are a burden to the weary beast. They stoop, they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden, but themselves are gone into captivity; Isa 46:1, Isa 46:2. The case of Elijah and the prophets of Baal should not be forgotten here; this prophet, by seeming to acknowledge the reality of Baal's being, though by a strong irony, poured the most sovereign contempt upon him, his worshippers, and his worship: And Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud; For He Is A God: either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awaked; 1Kgs 18:27. See the observations at the end of Exodus 12. See Clarke's note at Exo 12:51.

The Lord doth put a difference - See on Exo 8:22 (note). And for the variations between the Hebrew and Samaritan Pentateuch in this place, see at the end of the chapter. See Clarke's note at Exo 11:9.

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EXODUS 11:8 All these your servants shall come down to me, and bow down themselves to me, saying, "Get out, with all the people who follow you"; and after that I will go out." He went out from Pharaoh in hot anger.

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#### Verse 8

And all these thy servants shall come - A prediction of what actually took place. See Exo 12:31-33.

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EXODUS 11:9 The LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh won't listen to you, that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt."

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#### Verse 9

Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you - Though shall and will are both reputed signs of the future tense, and by many indiscriminately used, yet they make a most essential difference in composition in a variety of cases. For instance, if we translate לא ישמע lo yishma, Pharaoh Shall not hearken, as in our text, the word shall strongly intimates that it was impossible for Pharaoh to hearken, and that God had placed him under that impossibility: but if we translate as we should do, Pharaoh Will not hearken, it alters the case most essentially, and agrees with the many passages in the preceding chapters, where he is said to have hardened his own heart; as this proves that he, without any impulsive necessity, obstinately refused to attend to what Moses said or threatened; and that God took the advantage of this obstinacy to work another miracle, and thus multiply his wonders in the land.

Pharaoh Will not hearken unto you; and because he would not God hardened his heart - left him to his own obstinacy.

To most critics it is well known that there are in several parts of the Pentateuch considerable differences between the Hebrew and Samaritan copies of this work. In this chapter the variations are of considerable importance, and competent critics have allowed that the Samaritan text, especially in this chapter, is fuller and better connected than that of the Hebrew.

1. It is evident that the eighth verse in the present Hebrew text has no natural connection with the seventh. For in the seventh verse Moses delivers to the Israelites what God had commanded him to say: and in the eighth he appears to continue a direct discourse unto Pharaoh, though it does not appear when this discourse was begun. This is quite contrary to the custom of Moses, Who always particularly notes the commencement of his discourses.

2. It is not likely that the Samaritans have added these portions, as they could have no private interest to serve by so doing; and therefore it is likely that these additions were originally parts of the sacred text, and might have been omitted, because an ancient copyist found the substance of them in other places. It must however be granted, that the principal additions in the Samaritan are repetitions of speeches which exist in the Hebrew text.

3. The principal part of these additions do not appear to have been borrowed from any other quarter. Interpolations in general are easily discerned from the confusion they introduce; but instead of deranging the sense, the additions here made it much more apparent; for should these not be admitted it is evident that something is wanting, without which the connection is incomplete - See Calmet. But the reader is still requested to observe, that the supplementary matter in the Samaritan is collected from other parts of the Hebrew text; and that the principal merit of the Samaritan is, that it preserves the words in a better arrangement.

Dr. Kennicott has entered into this subject at large, and by printing the two texts in parallel columns, the supplementary matter in the Samaritan and the hiatus in the Hebrew text will be at once perceived. It is well known that he preferred the Samaritan to the Hebrew Pentateuch; and his reasons for that preference in this case I shall subjoin. As the work is extremely scarce from which I select them, one class of readers especially will be glad to meet with them in this place. "Within these five chapters. 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11, are seven very great differences between the Hebrew and Samaritan Pentateuchs, relating to the speeches which denounced seven out of the ten judgments upon the Egyptians, viz., waters into blood, frogs, flies, murrain, hail, locusts and destruction of the first-born. The Hebrew text gives the speeches concerning these judgments only once at each; but the Samaritan gives each speech Twice. In the Hebrew we have the speeches concerning the five first as in command from God to Moses, without reading that Moses delivered them; and concerning the two last, as delivered by Moses to Pharaoh, without reading that God had commanded them. Whereas in the Samaritan we find every speech Twice: God commands Moses to go and speak thus or thus before Pharaoh; Moses goes and denounces the judgment; Pharaoh disobeys, and the judgment takes place. All this is perfectly regular, and exactly agreeable to the double speeches of Homer in very ancient times. I have not the least doubt that the Hebrew text now wants many words in each of the seven following places: Exodus 7, between Exo 7:18 and Exo 7:19; end of Exodus 7; Exodus 8, between 19 and 20;; Exodus 10, between 2 and 3; Exo 11:1-10, at Exo 11:3 and Exo 11:4. The reader will permit me to refer him (for all the words thus omitted) to my own edition of the Hebrew Bible, (Oxford 1780, 2 vols. fol)., where the whole differences are most clearly described. As this is a matter of very extensive consequence, I cannot but observe here, that the present Hebrew text of Exo 11:1-10 did formerly, and does still appear to me to furnish a demonstration against itself, in proof of the double speech being formerly recorded there, as it is now in the Samaritan. And some very learned men have confessed the impossibility of explaining this chapter without the assistance of the Samaritan Pentateuch. I shall now give this important chapter as I presume it stood originally, distinguishing by italics all such words as are added to or differ from our present translation. And before this chapter must be placed the two last verses of the chapter preceding, Exo 10:28-29 : And Pharaoh said unto him, Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more;

for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die. And Moses said, Thou hast well spoken, I will see thy face again no more.

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EXODUS 11:10 Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh, and the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he didn't let the children of Israel go out of his land.

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