

# The Plagues

## Exodus 5 - 10

The people and animal in the picture are suffering a terrible attack of flies sent by God. Why? That will not be the only suffering sent to the people of Egypt. Let's find out more.



### Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, Please send your Holy Spirit into my heart through Your Word that we are about to study. Help me to learn about the plagues You sent on Egypt. Show me how Your will is done at all times. In Jesus' name. Amen.

### The Plagues - a paraphrase of Exodus 5 - 10

God's people, the Israelites, were slaves in the land of Egypt. God sent Moses and Aaron to see Pharaoh, the great king of Egypt. The Lord told Moses and Aaron that when Pharaoh asked them to perform a miracle Aaron should take his staff and throw it down before Pharaoh and it would become a snake.

Aaron and Moses did just as the Lord commanded. Aaron threw down his staff in front of Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a snake. Pharaoh summoned his wise men, sorcerers, and magicians to perform the same act. Each one threw down his staff and it became a snake. They did this by their secret arts. Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs. Yet Pharaoh's heart became hard and he would not listen to Moses and Aaron.

The Lord came to Moses and said, "Pharaoh's heart is unyielding; he refuses to let the people go. Go to Pharaoh in the morning as he goes out to the water. Wait on the bank of the Nile to meet him and take in your hand the staff that was

changed into a snake. Then say to him, 'The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has sent me to say to you; Let my people go, so that they may worship me in the desert. But until now you have not listened. This is what the Lord says: By this you will know that I am the Lord; with the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water of the Nile, and it will be changed into blood. The fish in the Nile will die, and the river will stink; the Egyptians will not be able to drink its water.'"

Moses and Aaron did just as the Lord commanded. Aaron raised his staff in front of Pharaoh and his officials and struck the water of the Nile and the water was changed into blood. All the fish in the water died, and the river smelled so bad that the Egyptians could not drink any water.

Pharaoh's magicians did the same thing by their secret arts. Pharaoh saw all this and did not care. He went back into his palace and would not listen to the Word of the Lord. Seven days passed and



the Lord came to Moses and asked him to go speak to Pharaoh again. Moses went to Pharaoh and told him that if he would not let the Israelites go the Lord would send a plague of frogs on the whole country.

The frogs descended upon the land. They came into the palace and into Pharaoh's bedroom. They got into all the water and food. They swarmed up on all the people.

Pharaoh called to Moses and Aaron and said, "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 replied, "I leave to you the honor of setting the time for me to pray for you and your officials and your people that you and your houses may be rid of the frogs, except for those that remain in the Nile."

"Tomorrow," replied Pharaoh.

Moses replied, "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 your houses, your officials and your people; they will remain only in the Nile."

Moses and Aaron left Pharaoh and prayed to God to remove the frogs. God did as Moses asked and there were piles of dead frogs all over the land. When Pharaoh saw that relief had come to his people he hardened his heart and would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the Lord had said he would do.

God told Aaron to stretch out his staff over the land and strike the dust on the ground. Throughout the land of Egypt the dust on the ground became gnats. They came up on all the people and animals.

Pharaoh's magicians went to Pharaoh and told him that this was the finger of God. But Pharaoh's heart was hard and he would not listen.

God sent Moses to Pharaoh to warn him that if he did not let the people go to worship Him he would send swarms of flies over the land of Egypt. They would fill the houses and cover the people. There would be nothing that would not be covered by flies. However the land of Goshen where the Israelites lived was not swarmed by flies.

The Lord did as He said and swarms of flies ruined the land of Egypt. Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and said, "GO, sacrifice to your God here in the land."

But Moses said, "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 said, "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 answered, "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 to offer sacrifices to the Lord."

Moses left Pharaoh and prayed that the Lord would take away the flies. The Lord did as Moses asked. However by the time all the flies had gone Pharaoh had hardened his heart and would not let the people go.

God sent Moses to Pharaoh to tell him that unless he let the people go to worship the Lord, He would send a horrible sickness on the livestock in the fields - on the horses, donkeys, camels, cattle, sheep and goats. Yet the Lord would not touch the animals belonging to the Israelites. The

next day the Lord sent the disease and it killed all the livestock in Egypt but none of the Israelite's livestock was hurt.

Pharaoh sent me out to investigate and found out what the Lord had said was true. Yet his heart was unchanging and he would not let the people go.

The Lord told Moses and Aaron to take handfuls of soot from a furnace and have Moses toss it up into the air. The soot became a fine dust that covered the whole land of Egypt and caused festering boils to break out on all the men and animals. Pharaoh's magicians couldn't even try to copy Moses and Aaron because they were covered with boils. God hardened Pharaoh's heart and he would not listen to the words of Moses and Aaron.

God sent Moses to Pharaoh to warn him that if he would not let the people go the Lord would send the full force of His plagues against the land of Egypt. He would do this to show Pharaoh that He had all power. Moses told Pharaoh that tomorrow a horrible hailstorm would strike and those who feared the Word of the Lord should bring their livestock in out of the fields.

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky so that hail will fall all over Egypt - on men and animals and on everything growing in the fields of Egypt." When Moses stretched out his staff toward the sky, the Lord sent thunder and hail, and lightning flashed down to the ground. It was the worst storm Egypt had seen since it had become a nation. The only place it did not hail was in the land of Goshen where the Israelites were.

Pharaoh summoned Moses to him and said, "This time I have sinned. The Lord is right, I and my people are 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 replied, "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."

When Moses had prayed to God and the storm had stopped Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not let the Israelites go, just as the Lord had said through Moses.

Moses and Aaron went before Pharaoh and said to him, "This is what the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, says; 'How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go, so that they may worship Me. If you refuse to let them go, I will bring locusts into your country tomorrow. They will cover the face of the ground so that it cannot be seen. They will devour what little you have left after the hail, including every tree that is growing in your fields. They will fill your houses and those of all your officials and all the Egyptians - something neither your fathers nor your forefathers have ever seen from the day they settled in this land till now.'"

After Moses had said this he left Pharaoh. Pharaoh's officials said to Pharaoh, "How long will this man be a snare to us? Let the people go, so that they may worship the Lord their God. Do you not realize that Egypt is ruined?"

Pharaoh brought back Moses and Aaron and said, "Go, worship the Lord your God. But just who will be going?"

Moses answered, "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 said, "The Lord be with you if I let you go, along with your women and

children! Clearly you are bent on evil. No! Have only the men go; and worship the Lord, since that's what you have been asking for." Then Moses and Aaron were driven out of Pharaoh's presence.

The Lord told Moses to stretch his hand out over the land so that the locusts would swarm over the land and devour everything growing in the fields.

Pharaoh quickly summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "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."

Moses prayed and the Lord changed the direction of the wind and not a locust was left in the land of Egypt. But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart and he would not let the Israelites go.

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky so that the darkness will spread over Egypt - darkness that can be felt."

Moses did as the Lord told him and a

darkness spread over the land of Egypt that lasted for three days. 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.

Pharaoh called Moses to him, "Go, and worship the Lord. Even your women and children may go with you; only leave your flocks and herds behind."

But Moses said, "You must allow us to have sacrifices and burnt offerings to present to the Lord our God. Our livestock too must go with us; not a hoof is to be left behind. We have to use some of them in worshiping the Lord our God, and until we get there we will not know what we are to use to worship the Lord."

But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart and he was not willing to let them go. Pharaoh said to Moses, "Get out of my sight! Make sure you do not appear before me again! The day you see my face you will die."

"Just as you say," Moses replied, "I will never appear before you again."

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## **Outer Aim - God's will is done for the Children of Israel in Egypt.**

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### **What the Story Tells Us - Answer each question.**

1. How did God show Pharaoh His power?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How did Pharaoh respond to the plagues?

3. What did God finally do?

**What God Tells Us** - Divide into three groups. Each group select one **IDEA** from the story. Then discuss each idea in reference to the three **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS** that follow.

**IDEAS:**

1. To show Pharaoh that He was the true God, God sent horrible plagues on the Egyptians.
2. Pharaoh continued to harden his heart.
3. God hardened Pharaoh's heart so that he could not repent.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. List passages from Scripture that teach us this idea.
2. Why do you think that the Holy Spirit wrote this information for us, and why is it relevant for us today?
3. How can we apply what the Lord is teaching us here to our own personal lives?

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## **Inner Aim - God's will is done in our life.**

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### **Passages**

Matthew 11:28 "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Philippians 1:21 - For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Psalms 37:5 - Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.

Psalms 31:1 - In You, O LORD, I put my trust; let me never be ashamed; deliver me in Your righteousness.

Psalms 27:1 - The Lord is my Light and Salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?

## **The Conclusion to the 10 Commandments** (Sydow Catechism © 2000)

*What does God say about all of these commandments?*

He says, "I, the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments.

*What does this mean?*

God threatens to punish all who do not obey these commandments. Therefore, we should fear His anger and not do anything against what He commands. God also promises grace and every blessing to those who obey these commandments. Therefore, we should love and trust Him and willingly do what He commands.

### **Hymn** - TLH #517 v. 1, 2

The will of God is always best and shall be done forever;  
And they who trust in Him are blest, He will forsake them never.  
He helps indeed in time of need, He chastens with forbearing;  
They who depend on God, their Friend, shall not be left despairing.

God is my Comfort and my Trust, My Hope and Life abiding;  
And to His counsel, wise and just, I yield, in Him confiding.  
The very hairs, His Word declares, upon my head He numbers.  
By night and day God is my Stay, He never sleeps nor slumbers.

### **Prayer**

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.