



Church of God Sunday School

THE PLAGUES OF EGYPT

Exodus 7:1 — 10:29

When God told Moses to lead the Israelite people out of Egyptian slavery, God warned of the hardness of Pharaoh's heart. Pharaoh was not going to listen to Moses. But God was going to use his stubbornness to show His power to the "Egyptians [who] shall know that I am the LORD."

As God commanded, Moses and Aaron went before Pharaoh, asking him to let God's people go. (Moses was eighty, and Aaron was eighty-three.) Pharaoh asked for a miracle (as God said he would), and Moses said to Aaron, "Take thy rod, and cast it before Pharaoh, and it shall become a serpent."

When the rod became a serpent, Pharaoh called his wise men and sorcerers. They cast their rods on the ground too. Their rods also turned into serpents—"but Aaron's rod [still a serpent] swallowed up their rods [serpents]." Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he refused to let the people go.

The next day, Moses was waiting for Pharaoh when he came down to the river. Moses told Pharaoh, "The LORD God of the Hebrews hath sent me unto thee, saying, Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness." Because Pharaoh would not listen, Moses said that he would smite the water with his rod and the river would turn to *blood*.

Then, Moses told Aaron to take the rod in his hand and stretch out his hand over the water. Aaron did as Moses said, and all the water in Egypt—streams, rivers, ponds, and drinking water—became blood. "And there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt."

The river smelled terrible, and all the fish died. However, Pharaoh's magicians could do the same thing with their magic. So Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh returned to his house. All of the Egyptians had to dig in the ground close to the river to find water, because they could not drink water from the river.

At the Lord's command, Moses went back to

Pharaoh and said God would smite the land with *frogs* if he did not let the people go. Frogs would be in Pharaoh's house and in his servants' houses and in the houses of all his people. The frogs would be on their beds, in their ovens, and in their "kneadingtroughs" (bowls for making bread).

"Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs came up, and covered the land of Egypt." Then, Pharaoh's magicians used "enchancements" (secret magic) to also bring up frogs. When Pharaoh pleaded for the removal of the frogs, he promised to let the people go; but when all the frogs were dead, he did not keep his word.

Next the Lord told Moses to tell Aaron to stretch out his rod and smite the dust of the ground. When Aaron did this, the dust became *lice* on the people and on the animals. Pharaoh's magicians could not bring forth lice, and they told Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God"; but he only hardened his heart more.

God told Moses to go again to Pharaoh and say that "swarms of flies" would come in upon the land if he did not allow the people to leave Egypt. Sure enough, when Pharaoh did not listen to Moses, God sent horrible swarms of *flies*. They covered the land of Egypt. But in Goshen—the land where the Israelites lived—there were no flies! God put a division between His people and the Egyptians.

Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron. This time, he said they could go offer sacrifices to God—but they had to stay in the land of Egypt. But Moses said no, they could not sacrifice in Egypt, lest the Egyptians be offended at their sacrifices and kill the Hebrews. Moses said they would go on a three-day journey into the wilderness.

Pharaoh said he would let them go into the wilderness, but he did not want them to go very far away. Moses called on God to remove the swarm of flies, but when they were removed, Pharaoh went back on his word again. He would not let the people go.

Next, God allowed a terrible disease, *murrain*, to come on the Egyptians' cattle, horses, camels, donkeys, oxen, and sheep. But God protected His people: "The cattle of Egypt died: but of the cattle of the children of

Israel died not one." Yet, Pharaoh continued to harden his heart.

Then God told Moses to take handfuls of ashes from the furnace and sprinkle them toward the sky in front of Pharaoh. When he did, the ashes became *boils* (painful sores) on the Egyptian people and on their animals. The magicians had boils too, and they could not stand before Moses.

After Pharaoh refused, again, to let the people go, God said He would rain down a terrible *hail*, such as Egypt had never seen. The people were warned to find shelter, not only for themselves but also for their animals, for if either man or beast were in the field, the hail would kill them. So the Egyptians who feared the Lord took their cattle to shelter and went inside too.

When the hail came, it was mingled with thunder and fire. It destroyed all that was in the field—man, beast, trees, and vegetables. "Only in the land of Goshen . . . was there no hail." Pharaoh begged Moses to ask God to stop the thundering and hail. But when it ceased, Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites go.

Next, God sent a great number of *locusts* (similar to grasshoppers). God sent so many locusts that they covered the ground! They finished eating what the hail had left of the green plants and the fruit trees. Not one green thing remained. Then God removed the locusts

with a strong west wind and cast them into the Red Sea.

After that, a thick *darkness* came over the land of Egypt for three days. That darkness was so thick, it could be felt! Only "the children of Israel had light in their dwellings." Pharaoh told Moses the people could go, but they had to leave their animals in Egypt.

Moses said that they must take all their cattle with them to offer sacrifices to the Lord. Pharaoh's heart became so hardened that he told Moses, "Get thee from me . . . see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die." Moses answered, "Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more."

Moses and Aaron left Pharaoh. But there was one more plague to come upon the Egyptians; it would be the worst of them all. The tenth plague would be the *death of all the firstborn* in the land of Egypt. God told Moses that Pharaoh would be so shaken by that plague that he would drive them out of Egypt! He would want them to leave as fast as they could.

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**MEMORY VERSE:**  
*"Let my people go, that they may serve me."*  
—Exodus 9:1  
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