

Plagues on Egypt

MEMORY VERSE:

"And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them." "

Exodus 7:5

Pharaoh was a great and mighty king. He was clothed in splendid robes and a golden headress and sat on a great throne. He had total power over all the land of Egypt. Everything he commanded was done immediately and anyone who displeased him would be killed.

Moses had been a shepherd for forty years. He was simply dressed in sandals and a woollen robe. He had no power or authority in the land of Egypt at all. Yet God had told Moses to go to the great Pharaoh of Egypt and to command him to let all his slaves, the Israelites, leave Egypt. Pharaoh did not know anything about the true God and he certainly would not want to lose his slaves, who did all his building work for him.

Moses must have been very afraid when he went to see Pharaoh the first time. Yet God had told him to go and he knew that God would help him, so he made up his mind to do his best and he went to see Pharaoh. Moses told Pharaoh, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'Let my people go.'" Then Pharaoh replied, as Moses had expected, "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 and Aaron told Pharaoh that he should let the Israelites go or God would send plagues on the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh was very angry and would not listen. He made the Israelite slaves work even harder than ever. God told Moses that He would make Pharaoh let the people go, but first He would send plagues on Egypt to punish Pharaoh for his disobedience.

The Egyptians had a wonderful river called the Nile, they used the water to wash in and to drink. The next day Moses and Aaron met Pharaoh as he went down to the River Nile to wash. They told him that if he refused to let the people go God would turn all the water in the land into blood. When Pharaoh refused, Aaron stretched his rod over the River Nile and all the water turned into blood. No-one could wash in the sticky red blood and everyone was very thirsty.

After seven days Moses visited Pharaoh again and warned him that unless he let the people leave Egypt, God would fill the land with frogs. But Pharaoh refused, so Aaron stretched his rod over the river and thousands upon thousands of frogs hopped out. There were frogs in the beds, frogs under everyone's feet and frogs in the cooking pots.

Pharaoh hated having frogs everywhere. Soon he sent for Moses and said that if God took the frogs away then he would let the people go. The next day God took away all the frogs, but as soon as the frogs had gone Pharaoh changed his mind and would not let the people go.

Moses and Aaron told Pharaoh that God would send a plague of lice, but Pharaoh would not listen. God sent a great plague of lice and everyone was covered with lice. Soon Pharaoh had to call Moses and tell him that he would let the people go if God took away the lice. But as soon as God had taken away the lice Pharaoh changed his mind again and would not let the people go.

Next came swarms of flies through all the land of Egypt, but as soon as God took away the flies, Pharaoh changed his mind once more and would not let the people go.

God sent five more plagues on the land of Egypt. He sent a plague which killed the cattle, a plague of boils on all the people and a plague of huge hailstones which killed the animals and spoiled the crops. Then came a plague of locusts which ate every green leaf in the land of Egypt and then God sent a plague of great darkness when no-one could see anything for three days. When each of these plagues came Pharaoh told Moses that if God took the plague away then he would let the people go. But guess what! As soon as God took away each plague Pharaoh changed his mind and would not let the people go.

Moses must have wondered when stubborn Pharaoh would ever make up his mind! The next lessons tells us how God brought the tenth and last plague on Egypt and how the Israelites left Egypt to travel to the land God had promised to them.

Things to Remember

- God sent ten plagues on the land of Egypt.
- The plagues showed how much more powerful God was than Pharaoh.
- Pharaoh was stubborn and did not want to admit the power of the Israelite's God.

Discussion

The Egyptians worshipped many different gods that weren't really gods at all. The ten plagues showed that the God of Israel was in control of everything (the Nile, the animals, the weather, light and human life). He was and is the only God.

What did God send Moses to tell Pharaoh?

Why did God send plagues on the land of Egypt?

Why did Pharaoh keep changing his mind?

Activity Suggestions

Draw a picture to illustrate the plagues God sent on Egypt.

Make an origami frog that hops!

1. Make a square piece of paper by folding one corner of a piece of paper diagonally over to the other side, leaving a rectangle at the bottom. Cut the rectangle off with a pair of scissors. Open up the fold, and you should have a square.
2. Take your square and fold it in half, matching up the edges. Then unfold, and repeat using the opposite edges. Open it into a square again.
3. Now take each corner and fold it in so the corner touches the center point.
4. With your paper in front of you in a diamond shape, fold each of the two top edges in to meet the center line.

5. Fold the small triangle at the bottom upwards.
6. Fold each of the bottom corners, in to the centre lining up the bottom edges.
7. Fold the bottom portion upwards, folding at a point about one-third of the way up from the bottom.
8. Fold the top half of this rectangle downwards to form the frog's legs.
9. Give your frog a head by folding a small part of the top point downwards. Draw on some eyes.
10. To make your frog hop, push down on the middle of the bottom fold, and slide your finger off.