

## CONTEXT

- Reminders about the setting: Israel has been living as slaves in Egypt for hundreds of years with no signs of that changing
- Last week in Exodus 3, Moses met God at the burning bush. God told Moses he would lead Israel out of Egypt to a land flowing with milk and honey
- This is a really big mission and Moses doesn't seem to be very confident
  - What if people don't believe that you told me this? → God empowers him to perform 3 miracles as evidence
  - Moses is not a great speaker and asks God to send someone else → God says he is the Lord who created mouths and sent Moses' brother Aaron to speak for him
- Moses and Aaron ask Pharaoh to go on a 3-day trip to Israel to sacrifice to God in the wilderness, or He will strike them with plague and sword
  - Pharaoh declines and imposes additional burdens on the Israelites, who then get angry at Moses
- God instructs Moses to tell the Israelites what He will do. With broken spirits, they don't listen
- God instructs Moses to ask Pharaoh to let Israel go. Moses doubts this plan, which angers God. God says Aaron will speak for him, He will harden Pharaoh's heart so he won't listen, and He will multiply His signs and wonders. After whatever God is going to do, the Egyptians will know that God is God
- As we move into our group study time, we'll begin by looking at the first 9 plagues in chapters 7-10. Because there's a lot of them, every table will look at a couple, everyone will try to answer the same questions, and after 12 minutes we'll hear from each table about what happened in chronological order
  - \*Divide up groups
- Then we'll move onto Passover in chapters 11-12

## PLAGUES: PART 1 (12 minutes)

Turn or scroll to Exodus in a Bible or Bible app.

Plague 1

**Read 7:14-25** out loud.

- **What was the plague?**
  - *Water was turned to blood in the Nile, other rivers, canals, ponds, all water reservoirs*
- **Why did the plague occur?**
  - *Pharaoh has not let the Israelites go to worship God in the wilderness*
  - *God was proving that He is Lord*
- **What was Pharaoh's response to the plague?**
  - *Pharaoh's heart was hard and he would not listen to Aaron and Moses (because the magicians of Egypt could also turn water to blood)*

## Plague 2

Read 8:1-15 out loud.

- **What was the plague?**
  - *Frogs came out of bodies of water and were everywhere*
- **Why did the plague occur?**
  - *Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites leave Egypt to worship God*
- **What was Pharaoh's response to the plague?**
  - *Pharaoh said to Moses and Aaron that he will let the Israelites go if they have God remove the frogs. When the frogs died, his heart was hardened and he did not let them go.*

## Plague 3

Read 8:16-19 out loud.

- **What was the plague?**
  - *Gnats on people and animals*
- **Why did the plague occur?**
  - *[No answer directly given]*
  - *If they don't know, tell your group: Pharaoh did not let the Israelites go after the previous plague*
- **What was Pharaoh's response to the plague?**
  - *Pharaoh's heart was hard and did not listen to Moses and Aaron*

## Plague 4

Read 8:20-32 out loud.

- **What was the plague?**
  - *Thick swarms of flies everywhere except Goshen, where the Israelites lived*
- **Why did the plague occur?**
  - *Pharaoh did not let the Israelites worship God*
- **What was Pharaoh's response to the plague?**
  - *Pharaoh would let the Israelites worship God in Egypt, which is illegal and would result in the Egyptians stoning them. Pharaoh then agreed to let the Israelites go if Moses gets God to remove the flies. When the flies were removed, Pharaoh's heart was hardened and he did not let them go.*

## Plague 5

Read 9:1-7 out loud.

- **What was the plague?**
  - *All Egyptian livestock died*
- **Why did the plague occur?**
  - *Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites go to worship God*
- **What was Pharaoh's response to the plague?**
  - *Pharaoh sent messengers to make sure none of the Israelite livestock died (they did not), had a hard heart, and did not let the Israelites go.*

## Plague 6

Read 9:8-12 out loud.

- **What was the plague?**
  - *Festering boils on people and animals*
- **Why did the plague occur?**
  - *[No answer given]*
  - *If they don't know, tell your group: Pharaoh did not let the Israelites go after the previous plague*
- **What was Pharaoh's response to the plague?**
  - *Pharaoh's heart was hardened by God and he did not listen to Moses and Aaron*

## Plague 7

Read 9:13-35 out loud.

- **What was the plague?**
  - *Deadly hail everywhere except Goshen, where the Israelites lived*
- **Why did the plague occur?**
  - *Pharaoh was still arrogantly refusing to let God's people go*
- **What was Pharaoh's response to the plague?**
  - *Pharaoh said he and Egypt are guilty of sin. After the hail stopped, he kept sinning, had a hardened heart, and did not let the Israelites go.*

## Plague 8

Read 10:1-20 out loud.

- **What was the plague?**
  - *Locusts ate all vegetation*
- **Why did the plague occur?**
  - *Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites leave Egypt so they could worship God*
- **What was Pharaoh's response to the plague?**
  - *Pharaoh said he sinned against God, Moses, and Aaron. When the locusts were gone, God hardened Pharaoh's heart and he did not let the Israelites go.*

## Plague 9

Read 10:21-29 out loud.

- **What was the plague?**
  - *Darkness everywhere except where the Israelites lived*
- **Why did the plague occur?**
  - *[No answer given]*
  - *If your group doesn't know, tell them: Pharaoh did not let the Israelites go after the previous plague*
- **What was Pharaoh's response to the plague?**
  - *Pharaoh told Moses the Israelite families could go, but they must leave their animals. Pharaoh does not let them take their livestock.*

- Pharaoh's heart was hardened, he did not let the Israelites go, and he told Moses "Leave me! Make sure you will never see my face again, for on the day you see my face, you will die"

## **PLAGUES: PART 2**

Share (to everyone)

- **Someone from each group briefly shares their answers**

Reflect (back to table discussions)

- **What patterns or themes did you notice while hearing about the different plagues?**
  - *Ask Pharaoh to worship God/follow God's command → rejection → Egypt receives punishment in the form of a plague → God hardens Pharaoh's heart*
  - *Pharaoh had the power to stop them and consistently chose not to*
  - *God hardened Pharaoh's heart every time, even when it looks like Pharaoh might be starting to change his mind about letting the Israelites go*
  - *God sent the plagues to display His power*
  - *Egypt is the target of the plagues; Israel is either never or substantially less affected by the plagues*

## **PASSOVER**

Read 11:1-3 out loud.

- **What promise did God make through the burning bush that was fulfilled here?**
  - *The Israelites had favor with the Egyptians and acquired their valuables when requested*
  - *Ex. 3:21-22 "And I will give these people such favor with the Egyptians that when you go, you will not go empty-handed. Each woman will ask her neighbor for silver and gold jewelry, and clothing, and you will put them on your sons and daughters. So you will plunder the Egyptians."*

Read 11:4-10 out loud.

- **What will the last plague be?**
  - *Every firstborn male will die, including people and livestock*

Read 12:1-11 out loud.

- **Summarize in 1 sentence**
  - *Every Israelite family should slaughter a perfect animal, put its blood on their doorposts, eat it, and be prepared to travel on a specific evening.*

Read 12:12-13 out loud.

- **Does this foreshadow something about Jesus? How?**
  - *Through Israel's trust in the sacrifice God provided, the blood of perfect lambs and sheep saved the firstborn males. Likewise, through faith in Jesus, the*

*perfect/sinless sacrifice God later provided, lives have been and continue to be spared. (Jesus is often referred to as the lamb who was slain)*

### **INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS**

*\*In no particular order. Pick your favorite or what might benefit your group most*

- What **surprised you** most about what we read?
- What do you think the **Israelites would have been thinking and feeling** throughout this passage?
- What do you think the **Egyptians would have been thinking and feeling** throughout this passage?
- 1 Cor. 5:7 says “For Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed.” After studying this passage and the origin of Passover, **do you see Jesus differently?**
- God claimed He was sending plagues **so that the world could see His power** (9:15, 10:1-2, 11:9). Why do you think this was important?