

General Church Education



The Ten Plagues

Exodus 7:1-24

Lesson 6

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 3: The Lord Is Our Lawgiver

For ages 8-9 years

The Ten Plagues

Exodus 7:1-24

For Parents and Teachers

The literal sense of the Word often speaks in “appearances,” that is, it speaks about something in the way that it might appear to us at first or when we are thinking from natural principles. The Hebrews blamed Moses for hardships he had not caused but were symptoms of their enslaved condition. Many years earlier they had chosen to stay in Egypt. In a sense they had become slaves to “the good life” they found there with Joseph. In this chapter it says that the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart, meaning that Pharaoh was a man of stubborn will—just as anyone’s is when they persist in evil.

A deeper study of the correspondences of the individual plagues is given in the book *Arcana Coelestia* or *Secrets of Heaven*. The Lord there reveals the evils in the heart and the false ideas in the mind of a person who resists change from an evil habit or way of life. We might think that Pharaoh should have been convinced much earlier by the plagues, but his conduct portrays how difficult it can be to give up selfish behaviors. When we are afraid or in trouble, we think and even say that we will change. But when the crisis passes, we often go right back to our old patterns of behavior. It can be a long process to change our desires or what we love.

Ideas for Children

- The Lord has miraculous power to fight evil and false ideas.
- The Lord does not harden our hearts; they grow hard if we do not let the Lord in.
- We should keep promises we make—especially promises we make to the Lord.

From the Writings

Something shall now be said concerning the power which a person has from the Lord against evils and falsities. All the power which angels and men have is from the Lord; and in proportion as they receive the Lord. People who believe that power against those things is from themselves are much deceived; for it is evil spirits, conjoined with the hells, that induce evils and thence falsities in a person. The Lord alone has power over the hells, and people have no power at all from themselves. In proportion, therefore, as one is conjoined to the Lord by love, in the same proportion the person has power. *Apocalypse Explained* 209

The Ten Plagues

Exodus 7:1-24

Words to Understand

pestilence—something that is harmful and dangerous, like a fatal disease

murrain—a deadly infections disease

boil—a painful swelling in the skin

locusts—large brown grasshoppers that travel in huge swarms

plague—a terrible thing that happens to people

loathe—to hate

kneading bowls—bowls used to mix and work dough when making bread

Signs from the Lord

The Lord gave Moses power to do three signs. First, his rod became a serpent when he threw it on the ground. Second, his hand became sick with leprosy when he put it inside his tunic and then it was healed again. And third, Moses was told to take some water from the river and it would become blood when poured on the ground.

Do you think these signs will be powerful enough to convince the Hebrews and Pharaoh that the Lord is speaking to them? The first time Moses and Aaron approached Pharaoh with the request to let the children of Israel go, he was angry and increased their burdens. Now they had to find straw to make bricks and the Hebrews blamed Moses and Aaron for their troubles. Remember, the Lord promised to send great miracles upon Egypt so that both Pharaoh and the Hebrews would know that

He was the Lord. Now we will see how the Lord began step by step to show Pharaoh he must let the children of Israel go. **Read Exodus 7:1-24.**



The Lord Tells Moses What to Expect

The Lord spoke to Moses. Then Moses told Aaron what to say to Pharaoh. The Lord warned that Pharaoh's heart would be hard and there would be great signs and wonders in the land of Egypt. The Lord knew it would not be easy for this stubborn man to change.

What happened when Moses and Aaron went again to see Pharaoh and showed him the miracle of the rod turning into a serpent? Could Pharaoh's magicians do the same thing? The Egyptians had knowledge of ancient wisdom about spiritual things, but they used it for evil

purposes. Using enchantments, the magicians also made their rods turn into serpents. However, Aaron's rod then swallowed up all their rods showing that the Lord was more powerful than the evil magicians of Egypt. But Pharaoh was not impressed. His heart grew hard and he did not listen to Moses and Aaron.



The Plagues Begin

In the morning the Lord sent Moses and Aaron out to the river bank to meet Pharaoh. They told Pharaoh that because he would not let the children of Israel go, the Egyptians would soon see the great power of the Lord. Moses told Pharaoh the water would turn into blood, the fish would die, the river would stink and the people would be loathe to drink the water. While Pharaoh stood there watching, Aaron took his rod, held it over the water and all the water in the land became blood, even the water in buckets and pitchers. Was there any good water to drink? No, the fish died and the river began to stink, just as Moses had said. All the Egyptians began to suffer because of this plague. Do you think this convinced Pharaoh? Pharaoh called his magicians again. They used their magic to turn water into blood. Pharaoh's heart grew hard. He was not impressed by this sign either.

What did Pharaoh say when the Lord sent Moses and Aaron back again? He refused to let the people go, so there would be a second plague. When Aaron stretched out his rod, frogs came up out of the rivers, streams and ponds of Egypt. There were so many frogs that the houses, beds, ovens and even the kneading bowls were filled with frogs. The magicians of Egypt were also able to make frogs come out of the water, but this time Pharaoh began to be afraid. He told Moses that he would let the people go if only the frogs could be taken away. Moses prayed to the Lord and all of the frogs suddenly died. The Egyptians gathered the dead frogs in heaps. There was a terrible smell from them. Do you think Pharaoh kept his promise? No, he didn't! When he saw that all the frogs were dead, his heart was hardened again.

More Plagues Follow

Lice are tiny bugs that bite people and animals. The Lord told Moses to have Aaron stretch out his rod over the dust of the land. All the dust turned into lice. The magicians of Egypt tried to make lice but they could not. Now the magicians were afraid too. They told Pharaoh that this was "the finger of God," but Pharaoh would not listen and the Lord hardened his heart yet more.

Next came a plague of biting flies. They swarmed over the land. The fifth plague brought a murrain, a deadly disease, upon all the animals. Then came boils upon the people and animals. This was followed by a terrible storm with lightning and hail that killed plants, animals and people. The eighth plague brought locusts which ate up the grain that was left from the hail damage. Then there was darkness for three days which made all the Egyptians afraid. In the last plague all the firstborn of people and cattle died in one night.

The Hebrews Are Safe

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These miseries did not come to the land of Goshen where the Hebrew homes were. But the Hebrews saw the damage in Egypt where people and animals suffered, food was destroyed and finally their firstborn died. The Hebrews began to trust more and more in the power of the Lord.

After these horrible plagues do you think Pharaoh changed his mind? Several times he said he would free the Hebrews if the plague would be taken away. However, each time the plague was taken away Pharaoh refused to honor his promise. It is often easy to make promises when we are afraid or suffering because we want the misery to end. Sometimes we forget our promises when the trouble is gone. At last, when even Pharaoh's firstborn died in the tenth plague, the children of Israel were finally set free. In fact, the Egyptians allowed them to take gold, silver and beautiful clothing because they were so happy to have them go.



Lessons Learned from the Plagues

As a result of the plagues Pharaoh and the Egyptians learned to respect the awesome power of the Lord. The Hebrews also learned to trust the Lord. And we can learn that evil actions are punished to help us learn to do what is right. We learn that the Lord gives us many chances to choose between right and wrong. We learn that it is good to keep our promises, especially our promises to the Lord. We also learn not to be so stubborn, like the cruel Pharaoh who had to be punished so many times!

Everyone has troubles. If we ask the Lord to help us, He will hear us just as He heard the cries of the children of Israel. He will help us and lead us out of our troubles if we are willing to listen to Him and try to do as He says. The Lord loves each and every person. He guides each of us away from our selfish loves and toward heavenly loves: loving the Lord and the neighbor.

Discussion Ideas

- Everyone has troubles in life. How can troubles help us learn to do better?
- Sometimes we bring troubles on ourselves, and sometimes they are not our fault.

Activity Overview | The Ten Plagues

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. John 15:12-4

Songs

Praise the Lord! Ye Heavens Adore Him

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-praise-the-lord-ye-heavens-adore-him/>

The Ten Plagues

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-the-ten-plagues/>

Projects

Choose one or two activities.



- Activity 1 | “Jumping” Origami Frogs
- Activity 2 | Wheel of Plagues (enlarge to use with group)
- Picture to color—Plague of Frogs (Exodus 8)

Additional Activity Ideas

- Watch a magic show and see how our eyes can fool us!
- Look at a live frog, or watch a video about frogs online.
- Has anyone made a promise to you? Talk about whether or not the promise was kept and how you felt about it.

Activity 1 | “Jumping” Origami Frogs

Create folded origami frogs that “jump”.

Materials Needed

one piece of paper in any color with sides are in the ratio of 2:3 (8½ x 11” paper works fine; the frog will be a little wider)

copy of the directions for each child


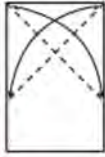

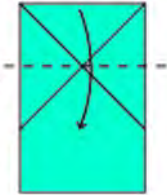

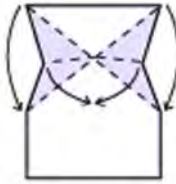

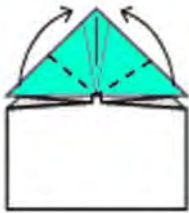

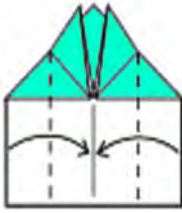

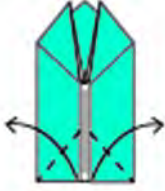

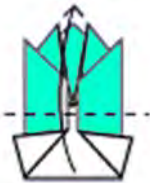

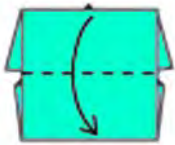

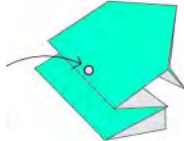
optional: sticker eyes or marker to draw eyes

Directions

1. Follow the folding directions on the next page.
2. *Optional*: add sticker eyes either side of the frog’s head *or* draw eyes as shown.
3. To make the frog jump, touch the middle of the back of the frog and release.



“Jumping” Origami Frogs Step-by-step Directions

<p>1. Choose a rectangular piece of paper with sides in the ratio of 2:3. (8½ x 11” also works fine; the frog will be a little wider.)</p> 	<p>2. Start with the back of the paper up. Fold and unfold diagonally so the top edge lines up with the side edge.</p>  
<p>3. Turn the paper over. Fold and unfold through the crossing diagonals.</p>  	<p>4. Turn over. Fold the top corners down and fold the midpoints inwards.</p>  
<p>5. Fold up the top two corners, just short of the center line so they point out a little.</p>  	<p>6. Fold the sides to the center.</p>  
<p>7. Fold out the rear legs.</p>  	<p>8. Fold in half in the middle, bringing the bottom to the top.</p>  
<p>9. Fold the top layer in half, bringing the top to the bottom and turn the frog over.</p>  	<p>10. The completed frog. <i>Optional:</i> add sticker eyes or draw eyes with markers. Press where shown to make the frog jump.</p> 



Activity 2 | Wheel of the Ten Plagues

Create a wheel showing the miracle of the ten plagues. Turn the wheel to show each plague and talk about the miracle that the Lord brought so that the people could be freed from Egypt.

Materials Needed

- crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- scissors
- paper fastener (brad)
- copy of each wheel (copied on to thick paper)

Set Up

Print a copy of each wheel on thick paper.

Directions

1. Draw a picture for each of the ten plagues in the sections of the wheel in the order that the plagues happened.

1. Water becomes blood
2. Frogs
3. Lice
4. Flies
5. Livestock diseased
6. Boils
7. Hail
8. Locusts
9. Darkness
10. Death of Firstborn

2. Cut out both circles.
3. Cut the V in the top wheel as marked.
4. Fasten the two circles together in the center using a paper fastener (brad).
5. Turn the wheel and share the story of the plagues. See if you can learn to tell which plague will come next and then check to see if you are right!

