

General Church Education



Family Lesson: EXODUS 6 – 12

The Ten Plagues

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Family Lesson 2 - C

The Ten Plagues
Exodus 6-12

Family Talk:
THE TEN PLAGUES

Rev. Donald Rose

There is a story in the book of Exodus where, seven times in a row, the Lord says, **“I will.”** That seven-fold promise was given when people were sad and hopeless and miserable and very much in need of a promise.

We will talk about the Lord’s kind of promise, but let’s first talk about quite another kind of promise. Let’s talk about the kind of promise people can make because of something they want. But it is a promise that they forget about later on. It is a promise that is not kept.

Do you ever hear someone say, “Oh, please” (when they are talking about what they want), and then say, “I promise I **will**...? Do you ever hear yourself saying it? As we grow up we begin to learn to look at our own promises more carefully. When very young we really mean it when we say, “If you will let me own a dog, I promise I will feed him every day, and take him for walks, and clean up any mess he makes.” A little child does not know what he may be promising. And he might feel a little ashamed when someone says, “But didn't you promise? Didn't you say, ‘I will?’”

Well, that is part of growing up. It is not bad. It begins to be bad when we promise we will not do something wrong, and then we keep going against the promise we made. Let’s think about the story of Pharaoh. It reminds us of a statement in the Writings that when a bad person is forced, he promises that he is sorry and that he will be good, but then when he is feeling free he just goes right back to his evil. An evil man, who, while in a state of constraint, promises to repent and even does what is good, returns to his former life of evil as soon as he is in a state of freedom again. (*The New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine* 168)

Isn’t that what happened with Pharaoh? He was very cruel to the Children of Israel and would not let them go. And when the Lord sent a plague against him he would finally say that if only the plague would stop, then he would let the people go. And then the plague did stop, but did he keep his promise? You know the answer to that.

And you also know that the Lord kept sending plagues until at last Pharaoh had to let them go.

Now what about the good promises of the Lord? Think of how sad the people felt. They were not free. They were being cruelly treated, and it got much worse, because after Moses first spoke to Pharaoh, Pharaoh got even crueler. And so the sixth chapter of Exodus is said to show that “**Now they are encouraged with hope, and with the promise that they are certainly to be set free**” (*Arcana Coelestia* 7183).

Do you ever feel so bad that promises do not cheer you up? That is how bad it had become. When people are in a very sad state, it is so hard for them to be cheered up, even when they are told good things. Note these words: “**They harkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage**” (*Exodus* 6:9).

Another way of saying that would be, “They just couldn't believe it, because they felt so terrible and were suffering so much.”

Well, the Lord knew their sorrow. He said that He had “**heard the groaning of the Children of Israel,**” and then He said very clearly what He would do. Whether they believed it or not, He was saying the truth — His promise. It goes like this. Notice the seven times it says, “**I will.**”

“...I am the Lord; **I will** bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, **I will** rescue you from their bondage, and **I will** redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.

“**I will** take you as My people, and **I will** be your God. Then you shall know that I am the Lord your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

“And **I will** bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and **I will** give it to you as a heritage: I am the Lord.”
(*Exodus* 6:6-8)

The Ten Plagues

Based on Exodus 7-12

Lori Odhner



1. First all the ri - vers were turned to blood— on the E - gyp - tian shores.
 2. Soon there were lice crawl - ing ev - 'ry - where,— fill - ing land and skies.
 3. Soon all the cat - tle and an - i - mals— sick - ened with mur - rain.
 4. Soon all the crops were— beat - en down— by the hail and fire.
 5. Soon a great dark - ness— filled the sky,— in fear the peo - ple cried.



Then there were frogs leap - ing all a - round, till they cried out for no more.
 Then there ap - peared in a swarm - ing cloud the— black and bit - ing flies.
 Then there were boi - ls and pes - ti - lence, bring - ing suf - fer - ing and pain.
 Then all the mass - es of lo - custs came to the Phar - aoh's great em - pire.
 Then came the last plague of E - gypt, and— all the first - born died.



Mo - ses said, "Please let My peo - ple go! We've been in slav - er - y far to long!"



(last time) But the Pha - raoh an - swered, "No, no, no, no!"
 And the Pha - raoh an - swered, "Yes, you may go!"

Some of Lori and John Odhner's Songs from the Word are available on tape and in a binder of sheet music from the General Church Book Center, Cairncrest, P. O. Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA, 19009 Telephone (215) 914-4920, e-mail bookctr@newchurch.edu

The Ten Plagues
Exodus 6-12
LEVEL 1 – A WHEEL OF PLAGUES

Your project is to make a wheel of the ten plagues.

Color each section in the wheel on page 2:

1. Color the river blood red.
2. Color the frogs green.
3. Color the dust turned to lice.
4. Color the flies black.
5. Color the dead cow and horse.
6. Color red sores on the Egyptian.
7. Color fire and hail killing plants.
8. Color the locust eating the plant. Color the plant brown.
9. Color it all black darkness.
10. Color the sad Egyptian parents.

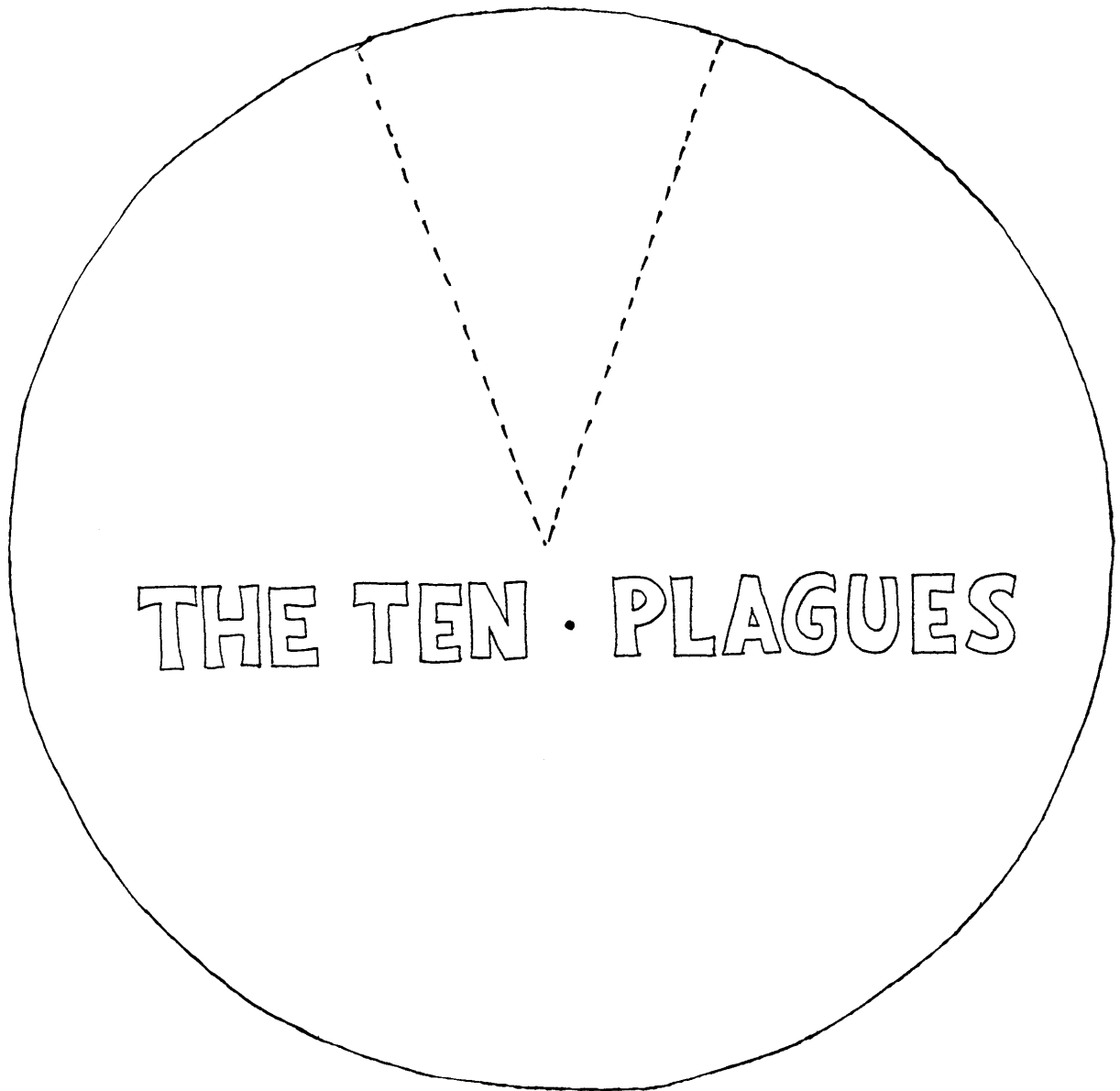
Cut out the wheel when you have finished coloring it.

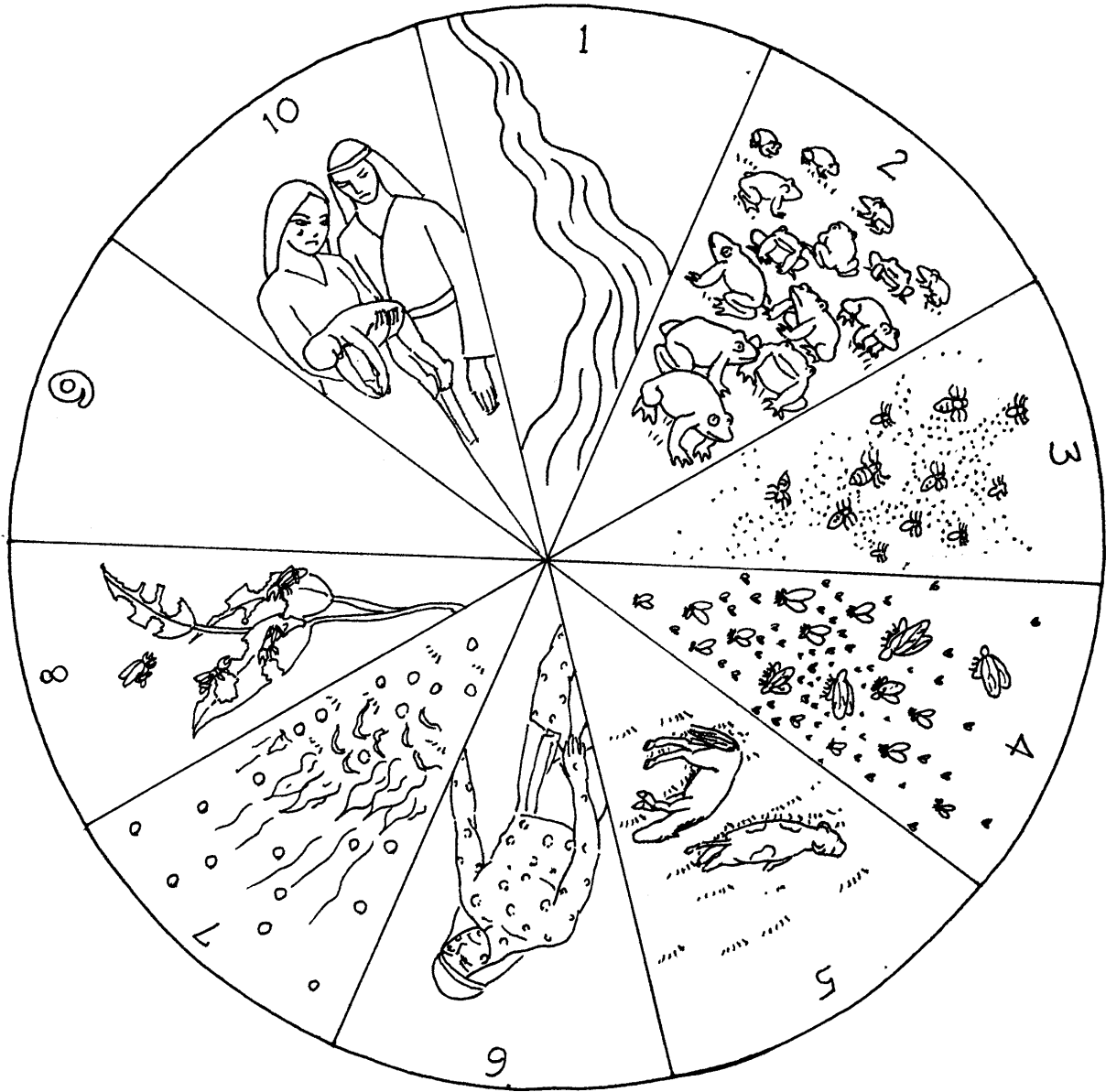
Cut out the wheel on page 3, including the wedge-shaped segment.

Put the wheel from page 3 on top of the wheel from page 2.

Push a metal fastener through the centers of the wheels to hold them together.

Now you can turn the top wheel so that one plague shows through at a time.





The Ten Plagues
Exodus 6-12
LEVEL 2 – LET MY PEOPLE GO

MATERIALS NEEDED

Pencil and Crayons
Glue, Scissors

Project One: Plagues

1. Cut out the doors on the next page, leaving the edge with the hinges intact.
2. On page 3, draw pictures of each plague in the boxes.
3. Then glue or tape the door page (page 2) over the page of plague pictures (page 3).
4. Fold the doors on the dotted lines to open them so you will be able to see the plagues underneath.

Project Two: The Ten Commandments

Parents:

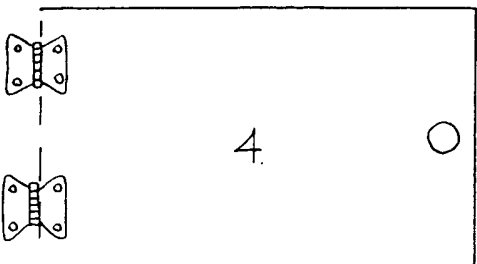
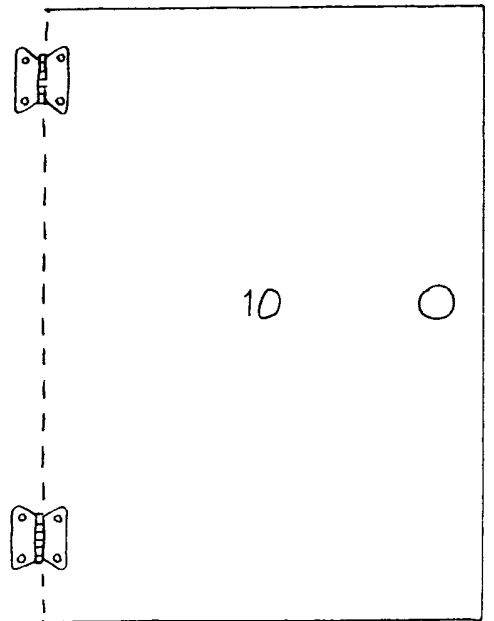
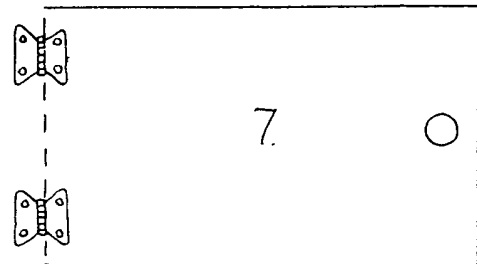
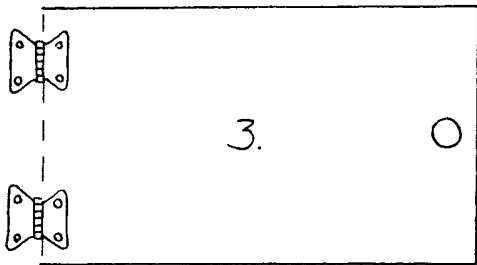
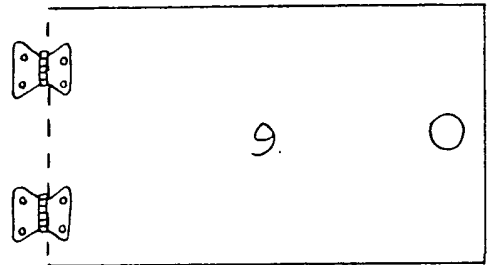
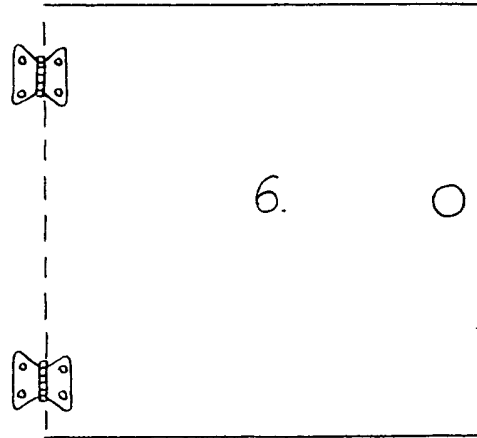
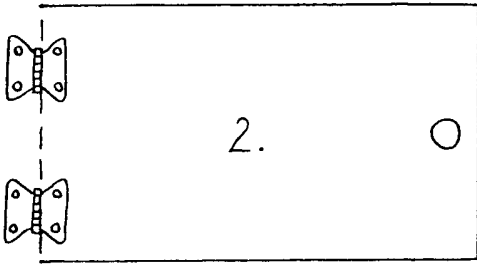
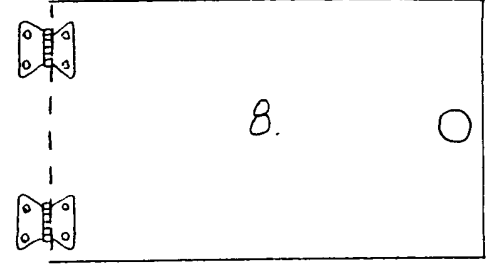
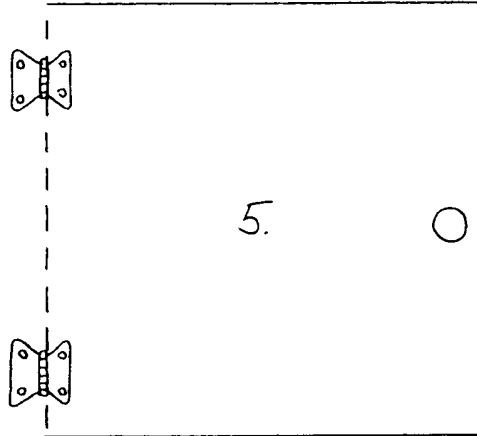
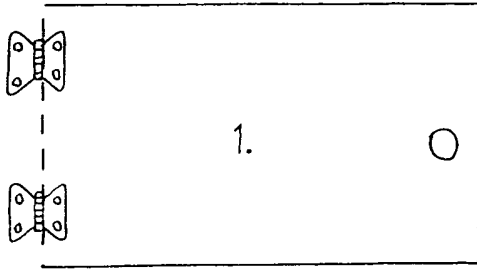
Briefly retell the story of the Lord's giving the Ten Commandments.

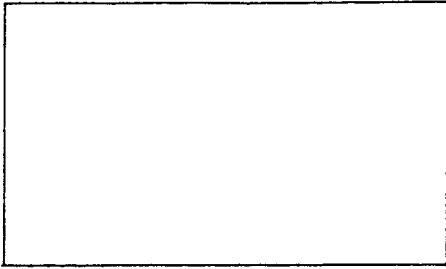
Go through each commandment, so that your child understands simply the basic laws.

As this is such a powerful story, perhaps paints and paper will convey best what your child “hears” from the story. He or she might paint Mount Sinai with the Lord speaking in thundering and lightning to the Israelites. Or perhaps the picture of Moses bringing down the tablets will appeal.

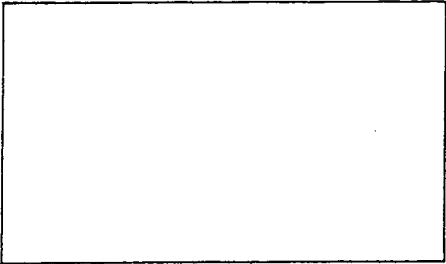
Another is to ask your child to choose a commandment to illustrate.

An enrichment activity would be to sing any songs you know about the Ten Commandments.

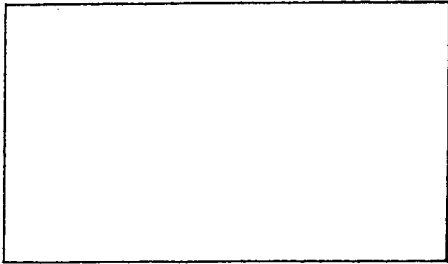




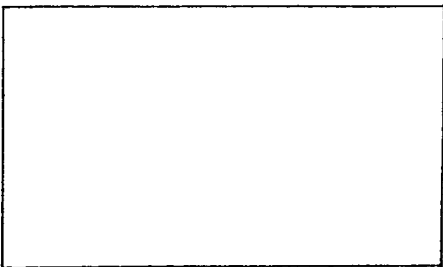
1. Rivers turn to blood



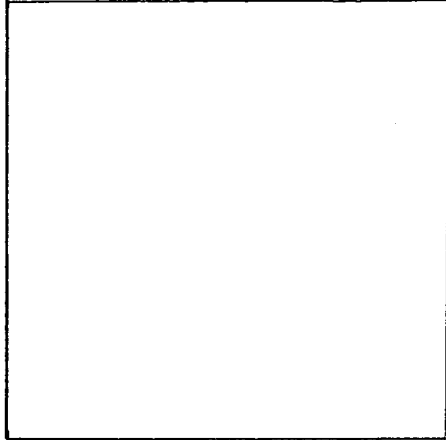
2. Frogs come out all over



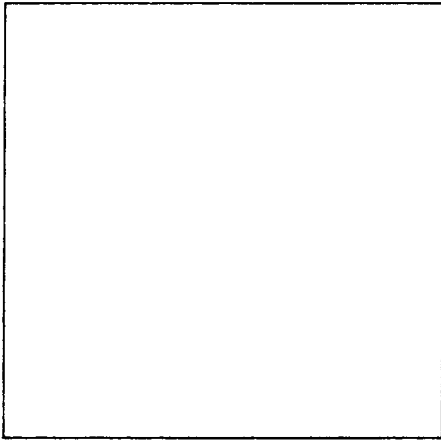
3. Dust turns into lice



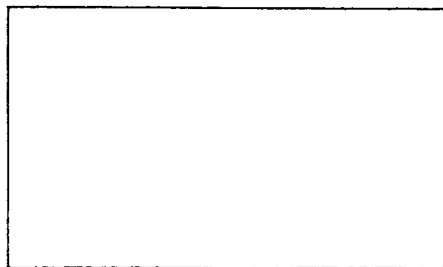
4. Swarms of flies cover the land



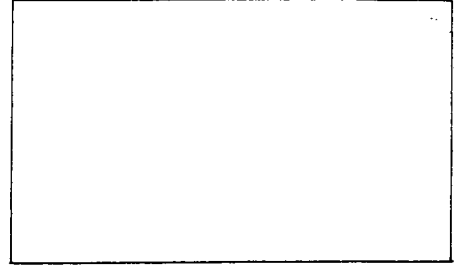
5. A disease kills cows and horses



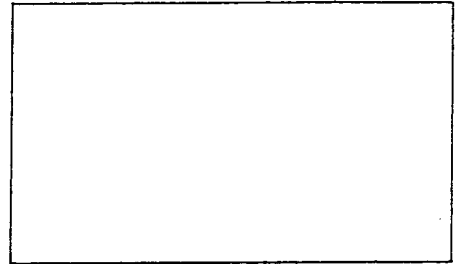
6. Boils break out on the people



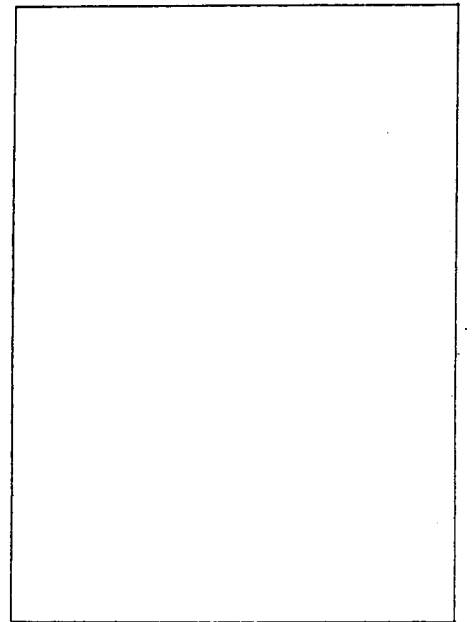
7. Fire and hail kill all the young plants



8. Locusts eat up all the bigger plants



9. Darkness covers the land



10. The oldest child of each Egyptian dies

The Ten Plagues

Exodus 6-12

LEVEL 3 – THE STORY OF THE PLAGUES

MATERIALS NEEDED

Pen or pencil

Try out the maze on the next page. It looks complicated, doesn't it? Begin at "START" and follow the path under and over other paths. When you get to a box with words, stop and read them, then go on to the end.

After you've traced it with your finger once or twice, do it with a pencil or pen — write down (on the separate page) the parts in the boxes as you come to them. When you are finished, you will have an outline of the story. Check it with the book of Exodus to see if you did it correctly.

The Lord God of the Hebrews said, Let my people go that they may serve me.

Rivers turned into blood.

Frogs covered the land

Dust turned into lice

Swarms of flies infested the land

Cows and horses died from a terrible illness

Egyptian magicians could do the same thing

Egyptian magicians could not do it

Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not let them go

Boils cover all the Egyptians

Storm of hail and fire and thunder kills all the crops

Take the plague away and I will let the people go

The plague stopped

Locusts ate all the crops

Darkness over the land for 3 days

All the Egyptian firstborn died, even Pharaoh's son

Pharaoh let the people go.

The Story of the Plagues

The Ten Plagues
Exodus 6-12
LEVEL 4 – SOJOURN IN EGYPT



The Children of Israel had to “sojourn (stay) in Egypt” for a long time.

Even though they were slaves, they were at first reluctant to leave Egypt and the things that they knew, and journey forward into unknown hardships.

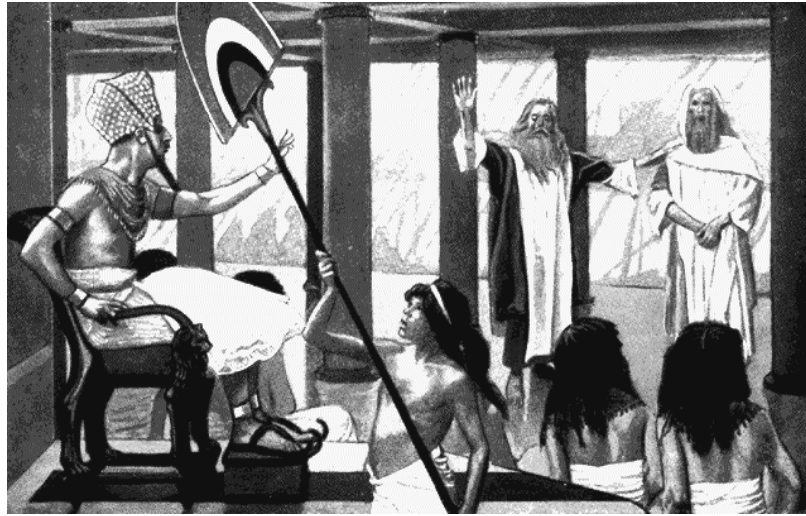
On our journey to heaven, we also “sojourn in Egypt.” It is the period in our lives when we are learning and gathering knowledge. It is an important part of our journey. Eventually we have to stop just learning things and begin to use them in our lives—we have to leave “Egypt” and move forward in our journey to heaven.

In this story both Pharaoh and the Children of Israel represent parts of each one of us. Let’s think what the story tells us about them and what parts of our minds are like them.

Application

1. Read and complete page 2, about Pharaoh.
2. Read and complete page 3, about the Children of Israel.
3. Illustrate the Ten Plagues on page 4.

Pharaoh



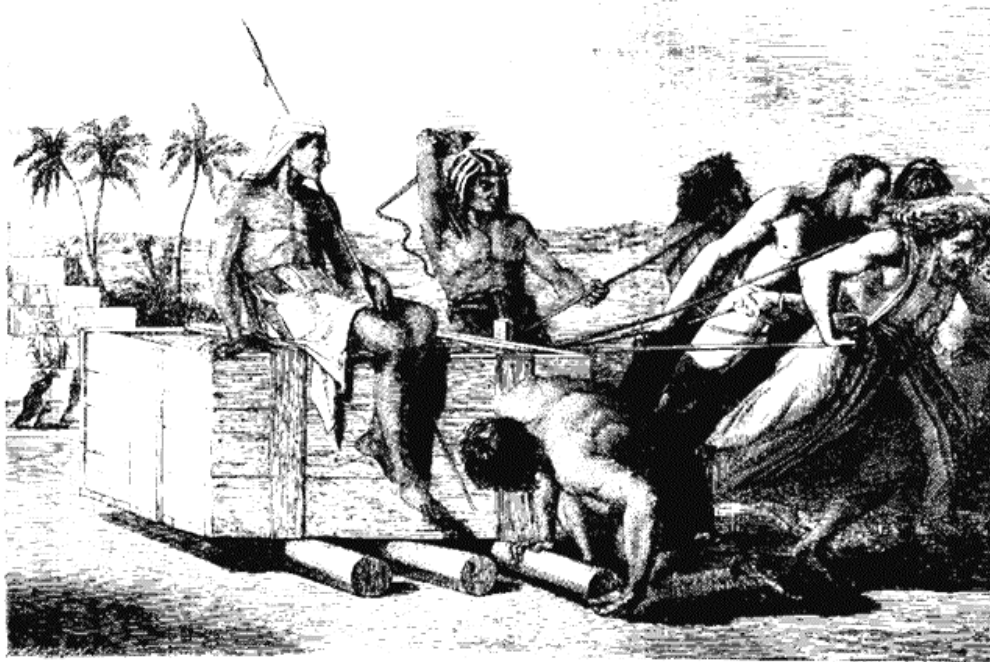
Who was Pharaoh?

Was he eager to let the Children of Israel go? Why?

Can you think of a time when you've wanted to hold onto something, no matter what, even if it was not right to do so?

What do you think you would be like twenty years from now if you always insisted on having your own way? Would people like you? What would it be like to work and play with someone like that?

Children of Israel



How did the Children of Israel get into Egypt?

How long had they been there? (*Exodus 12:40*)

What was it like for them in Egypt before they were made slaves?

Did they want to leave Egypt? Why?

Have you ever had a bad habit that you really did not like being slave to, but it was too hard to give up?

The Ten Plagues

When we grow up we can choose to follow the Lord, or to be slaves to the pleasures of this world.

The Ten Plagues show how the life of our spirit can gradually be destroyed if we forget about the Lord and heaven, and insist on being slaves just to the things of this world.

1. Look up in the Word what happened during each plague.
2. List the plagues in the first column on the next page.
3. Each plague pictures something that can happen to our hearts and minds if we let false ideas lead us away from the true and good things that the Lord teaches. Try to match up the spiritual meaning of each plague from the mixed-up list below. Write the meaning in the second column. *(This will be a little difficult to understand, but it will help you to see that everything in the Word teaches you about the life of your spirit).*



- *We allow little things we enjoy in the world to grow until they take over our thoughts and time.*
- *The mind is unable to see any real truth.*
- *Truth is made false, or bloody.*
- *The mind becomes full of the croaking arguments from false ideas.*
- *Good things are gradually killed by diseases.*
- *False ideas gradually eat up all the rest of the goodness.*
- *Swarms of false ideas fill the mind.*
- *Evil wants to destroy the true ideas just beginning to grow.*
- *Evils hidden in a person's heart and mind breaks out in their life.*
- *The person dies spiritually.*



They will jump up on you (Ex.8.4)

NATURAL PLAGUE	<u>OF THE PLAGUE</u>
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

The Ten Plagues
Exodus 6-12
LEVEL 5 – PLAGUES AS PUNISHMENTS



When we think of the ten plagues, described in our story today, we often think of their miraculous nature or their impossibility. However, today we want you to focus on why there were so many plagues.

A plague, in general, is a punishment. As you look at the ten plagues you see described various punishments put upon the people of Egypt so that they would do what the Lord wanted them to do: namely, let the children of Israel go.

In this story the Israelitish people stand for the good in us while Pharaoh and the Egyptians stand for the evil. It is evil that is punished until such time that evil sets good free. But why must evil undergo such lengthy plagues before its eventual release of the good?

Think about this story in relation to a specific evil, some bad habit that a person has. How do you get rid of a bad habit? Let's say that a person is a heavy cigarette smoker. How does a person break that habit? Do they just stop and all is well? Or do they have to take a good long time, facing a lot of struggle, before they can free themselves from the bad habit. Obviously the latter is the case. But what about the bad habit? Before we can get rid of a bad habit we have to recognize that it really is a bad habit. If a person doesn't see any harm in smoking cigarettes, why should he stop? It's only after he realizes how bad the habit is that he will be willing to get rid of it and so free himself from it.

This principle is just as true of evils as it is of bad habits. Evils do not want to set good free. To judge an evil thing as an evil thing we have to expose it for what it really is. In the process we have to see that it is evil, judge it, and then rid ourselves of it, that is, set our good loves free.

It would have been nice for both the Egyptians and the children of Israel if when Moses first went to see Pharaoh, Pharaoh had agreed to set the children of Israel free. However, he didn't. He could see no reason to release the children of Israel. Although he could understand that Moses and the Lord had some great power, the power to turn a rod into a snake, for example, still there was not sufficient cause to set the people free. Part of judgment is to make evil so clear that it is judged of itself.

The stories of the ten plagues describe how Pharaoh came to see how bad the evils represented by him and the Egyptians were. This is an important principle of judgment. No one goes to hell unless he sees that his evils are evil and still wants them. No one gives up an evil and allows it to leave him until that evil is exposed to the person for the ugly thing it really is.

Application

Here is an activity that will help you remember this important principle:

On the next page is a list of spiritual meanings for each of the ten plagues. At the beginning of each meaning write the name of the plague that goes with it.

(Answers are on the last page of this lesson)

A Spiritual Meaning For Each Plague

1. _____ Once intellectual ideas that control the mind have been made sick and die, then actual evils break out on the mind like infectious sores.
2. _____ There are evils of hatred in a person that taunt the person. For example, if you are feeling abused by another person and want to get even you're constantly plagued with thoughts about how to do it. Those thoughts flit around in your mind, taking away concentration on good things, filling the house of your mind with their infesting hatreds, as it were buzzing in your brain.
3. _____ As evil and falsity increase more and more in the mind, the light of truth is more and more extinguished until the mind dwells in pure and total falsity.
4. _____ In the Word the waters of Egypt stand for truths learned by the senses, the kinds of knowledges that we have in our memory. This plague describes how those knowledges are completely falsified to the point where they are totally unusable.
5. _____ The last step if evil is not removed is that all that a person has done that is good is destroyed. The children that we have represent the good and true things that we do. Their death signifies our renunciation of those good things.
6. _____ The more we disobey the Lord, the more we enter into open evils, the more we try to justify them with falsities, a whole series of little excuses that make our evils seem okay. These little excuses as it were rise up and cover the land of our mind, eating all the good that is left with us.
7. _____ Our mind is filled with many specific ideas. These ideas or intellectual things correspond to the cattle that dwell on this world. When these intellectual ideas are as it were sick and die, we are losing the truths that could guide us and so becoming more entrenched in evil.
8. _____ As you know, water is truth. Frozen water, then, is falsity. When it rains falsity upon the mind goods and truths are destroyed.
9. _____ The waters of Egypt stand for the knowledge we have learned in our memory. When we twist those knowledges by false reasonings, we bring out of the waters things which we call falsities, slimy kinds of things that twist us toward hell.
10. _____ In the Word, dust spiritually is like dirt in the mind, dirtiness or that which is evil. Dust or evil things in the mind can be turned into things which make the body itch, that is, sensual kinds of evils which make the outer mind itch, biting as it were with their tiny little lusts.

Answers: Plague 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Spiritual meaning 4 9 10 2 7 1 8 6 3 5