



# 8

## Plagues and the Passover

### Key Themes

- God provides salvation from sin through Jesus.
- God is omnipotent.

### Key Passages

- Exodus 5:1–2, 7:8–13, 7:20–21, 8:3–6, 8:17, 8:24, 9:6, 9:10, 9:23–25, 10:13–15, 10:22–23 12:3–13; John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7; John 3:16

### Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify how God used signs and wonders in Egypt to show that He is the one true God.
- Compare the Passover lamb in the Old Testament to the Passover Lamb, Jesus, in the New Testament.



## Lesson Overview



### Come On In

page 5

Students will color the Plagues of Egypt bookmark and then find and mark the Scripture verse referenced on the bookmark in their Bibles.



### Studying God's Word

page 5

Pharaoh rejected God's message from Moses and Aaron. God demonstrated His sovereignty, omnipotence, and faithfulness by sending the ten plagues on Egypt and finally ordaining that His people would go free.



### Activity 1: Plagues of Egypt Bookmark

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Students will recite the poem on their bookmarks and read the verse to review the plagues.



### Activity 2: A Passover for You

page 11

Students will use red and brown crepe paper streamers to make mock lintels and doorposts. They will stand under the doorway as the destroyer passes by. Those under the brown doorways will "die;" those under the red doorways will be protected.

# Lesson Preparation

## WHAT YOU WILL DO

## WHAT YOU WILL NEED



### COME ON IN

- Print the Plagues of Egypt bookmarks from the Resource DVD-ROM onto cardstock. Cut them out so that each student gets one bookmark.

- Plagues of Egypt bookmark for each student



### STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.

- Student Take Home Sheets



### PLAGUES OF EGYPT BOOKMARK

- Use the Plagues of Egypt bookmarks from the Come On In activity.

- Plagues of Egypt bookmarks



### A PASSOVER FOR YOU

- Cut red and brown crepe paper streamer strips for students to make their "doorways."
- Some students will receive three red streamers; others will receive three brown streamers.
- Cut open a large, black trash bag to represent the destroyer.

- Red and brown crepe paper strips
- Tape
- Large black trash bag



## Memory Verse

**Exodus 20:1–5a** And God spoke all these words, saying: "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them, nor serve them."

► **Pace your lesson!** You can use the provided clocks to indicate the time each section should be completed to keep the lesson on schedule. While teaching, you can compare your anticipated times with the actual time and shorten or drop sections as necessary.





# Prepare to Share

## SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

To prepare yourself and your heart for the lesson this week, read Exodus 5–12.

The historical account of Moses leading the Israelites out of Egypt and through the Red Sea is an event commemorated every year in the Jewish Passover, and mentioned many times throughout the Bible (Joshua 4:23; Nehemiah 9:9; Psalm 106:9; Acts 7:36; 1 Corinthians 10:1–2; Hebrews 11:29). “Thus says the Lord God of Israel: ‘Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness’” (Exodus 5:1). And so the passage of God’s people out of Israel begins. This first encounter between Moses and Pharaoh would prove to be one of many as God continually hardened Pharaoh’s heart and he refused to release God’s people (Exodus 7:13). Pharaoh’s initial reaction to this first of many requests from Moses for deliverance was to increase the hardships and labor of the Hebrew slaves (Exodus 5:6–14).

God’s people immediately began to question His plan for them (Exodus 5:20–21) by complaining to Moses. When Moses questioned God, God reminded Moses first of who He is, “I am the Lord” (Exodus 6:2, 6:8) and then of the covenant He made with His people to give them the land of Canaan (Exodus 6:4–5). He is faithful, He is powerful, and He will accomplish what He has said.

But God’s plan included more. It included miraculous signs beginning with Aaron’s rod (Exodus 7:8–13) and continuing through the plagues brought upon Egypt because of Pharaoh’s hardened heart (Exodus 7:14–10:29). Through all of the nine plagues, Pharaoh did not relent to release the Israelites (Exodus 10:27)—until the final plague, which destroyed the firstborn of all of Egypt including Pharaoh’s own son, and even to the firstborn of all the animals (Exodus 11:5).

And this was when God prescribed the Passover. It was intended to protect God’s people from the last devastating plague through the blood of the lamb—a lamb without blemish—which would be applied to the doorposts of the house (Exodus 12:5–7). God’s promise was to pass over the homes of His people. He would not strike them when he struck the land of Egypt (Exodus 12:13). And so we see, as only God can illustrate, a perfect foreshadowing of Christ, our Passover Lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7). The Lamb who was slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation

13:8). The Lamb who, by His blood, has granted eternal life to all who would repent and believe in His name (1 Peter 1:18–19).

## APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

You may hear some try to explain miracles—especially those performed in Exodus—with naturalistic explanations. However, we know from Scripture that each of the plagues was predicted by God through Moses and Aaron before it occurred. They were obviously miraculous deeds performed by a holy God. Some of the “natural” arguments surrounding the plagues include:

- The Nile River turned red due to a species of red algae mixed with red dirt. This combination washed into the river and made it appear as blood.
- This alleged red algae produced an anthrax virus that moved downstream killing the fish and causing the frogs to escape into the cities and countryside.
- A volcanic eruption in Santorini, Greece caused ash to taint the Nile and provoked the subsequent plagues ending with the ninth plague of darkness resulting from volcanic ash in the atmosphere.
- The Egyptians, in an attempt to appease their gods and end the plagues, offered up the firstborn as human sacrifices.

In many cases, it takes more creativity, imagination, and faith to believe some of the theories people will contrive in order to discredit God’s Word. We know, however, that human understanding cannot comprehend the nature and depth of God, for His message is foolishness to those who are perishing (1 Corinthians 1:18).

But we believe that the Bible is the final authority—the infallible and inerrant Word of God. We don’t need naturalistic explanations for the amazing things our Creator God has accomplished, whether it be the plagues of Egypt, a floating axe head (2 Kings 6:6–7), the sun standing still (Joshua 10:13–14), Jesus walking on water (Matthew 14:25–26), or the Resurrection of our Savior from the tomb (Matthew 28:6). We accept the Bible as the Word of the all-knowing and all-powerful Creator, who is fully able to perform supernatural wonders to accomplish His will.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Egyptian history can be traced back to Mizraim, Noah's grandson who settled there around 2150 BC after the dispersion at Babel (Genesis 11). In fact, the Hebrew word for Egypt is Mitsrayim which is also translated as Mizraim (Genesis 10:6, 10:13). The present name for Egypt is Misr, derived from the name Mizraim—the one who founded Egypt. Shortly after Mizraim established this first Egyptian dynasty, Egypt began pagan worship, inventing multiple false gods. God carried out each plague as a direct response to the Pharaoh's hardened heart. The plagues the Lord sent upon Egypt before the Exodus were judgments against the many false gods Egypt had devised to replace the one true God (Numbers 33:1–4), as shown below:

	Plague	Egyptian god
1	Nile turned to blood	Hapi, god of the Nile River
2	Frogs	Heqet, goddess of fertility, having a frog's head
3	Gnats or Lice	Geb and Akhor, gods of the earth
4	Flies	Khepri, god of creation, having a fly's head
5	Death of livestock	Hathor, the mother cow goddess
6	Boils	Isis, goddess of medicine
7	Hail	Nut, goddess of the sky
8	Locusts	Seth, god of vegetation

	Plague	Egyptian god
9	Darkness	Ra, god of the sun
10	Death of the firstborn	Pharaoh himself, held to be a god

In this account, God revealed that He alone is God (Isaiah 46:9), He is to be feared (Joshua 24:14), and He is faithful to His promises (Exodus 13:11).

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



## BEFORE THE THRONE

Holy Father I can't begin to imagine your power, wonder, and strength. This account gives me a glimpse into it. You truly are the only omnipotent creator. Help me to recognize the reality of the Exodus of your people from Egypt—the amazing things you did, the faithfulness you showed, and the punishment you wrought because of unbelief. Lord, please give me wisdom to present this lesson in a way that will clearly show the parallel between the first Passover and the perfect Passover Lamb who took away the sins of the world. Then I ask you, dear Father, to allow the students in my class to see the blood of Jesus Christ as the only way to escape the death sentence they carry because of their sin.



## COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- Give each one a Plagues of Egypt bookmark. They will color the bookmark, look up the Scripture reference on it, and place the bookmark in their Bibles to mark the reference. (If you have more than nine students, you can give the bookmarks with longer verses to more than one student.)



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



## REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons



# Studying God's Word

## READ THE WORD

We have talked a lot about Moses this quarter. Last time we saw that God called Moses. Moses did not want to obey God and came up with many excuses. But in the end, Moses returned to Egypt with his brother Aaron. Their mission was to bring God's people, the Israelites, out of Egypt. God told Moses that Pharaoh would refuse to let the people go. And, because of Pharaoh's refusal, God said He would stretch out His hand and strike Egypt with miraculous wonders (Exodus 3:20). Let's find out about those wonders.

Let's read Exodus 5:1–2 first. *Have someone read the passage.*

Exodus 5:1–2

## EXAMINE THE WORD

### Observe the Text

We know the Bible is God's Word, and in the book of Exodus God gives us details of what happened in Egypt when Moses and Aaron returned to free God's people from slavery.

- ? This is the first of many meetings between Pharaoh, Moses, and Aaron. Moses and Aaron were speaking for someone. Who? Look back at Exodus 5:1–2 for the answer. *The Lord God of Israel.*
- ? What did the Lord God want the people to do? *Go to the wilderness and hold a feast.*
- ? What did Pharaoh say? Look at verse 2. *Who is the Lord that I should obey Him? I will not let the people go.*

- ? **What did Pharaoh think of God?** *He thought he could ignore what God said. He thought since he was king he didn't have to obey anyone, even God. He did not know God.*

That's right. And instead of obeying God, the pharaoh ignored Him. In fact, he made the Hebrews work even harder.

### Discover the Truth

Just when the people were expecting things to get better because Moses and Aaron were there, things got worse! God reminded Moses that He is the Lord. And He told Moses that He would bring amazing signs and wonders to Egypt—and Pharaoh would let the people go. Pharaoh's heart was very hard; he was not going to give in easily. But God is more powerful than anyone. And His plans can never be stopped.



## Exodus 7:8–13

### READ THE WORD

Now let's read about the first miraculous sign. Turn to Exodus 7. We will read verses 8–13. *Divide the passage and have the students read the verses aloud.*

### EXAMINE THE WORD

#### Observe the Text

- ? **What was the first miraculous sign that the Lord did in front of Pharaoh?** Look in Exodus 7:9. *Aaron's rod became a snake or serpent.*
- ? **Pharaoh didn't like that at all. What did he do? Look in Exodus 7:11.** *He called the wise men, sorcerers, and magicians of Egypt.*
- ? **What are magicians and sorcerers and what do they do?** *Allow children to answer. Answers should include that they are people who use tricks and magic to fool people.*

That's right. In Egypt at this time magicians and sorcerers were very popular. They appeared to have special powers. But the Bible doesn't say much about those powers—but we know their power did not come from God. Pharaoh used the tricks of his magicians to try to match God's power. But we will see that there was no way they could keep up with God!

- ? **Look again at Exodus 7:12. How did God show that He was more powerful than the magic of the sorcerers?** *The snake from Aaron's rod swallowed up the magicians' rods.*

### Discover the Truth

- ? **Wow. God was powerful enough to turn Aaron's rod into a snake and then make Aaron's snake eat the magicians' snakes. What attribute of God tells us about His amazing power over all things?** *Omnipotent. Refer to the Attributes of God poster.*

**OMNIPOTENT**  
*(Refer to Attributes poster)*



God is powerful enough to control all things, including nature. God showed Pharaoh some of His power, but Pharaoh was stubborn and would not do what God told him to do. So God brought judgment on Pharaoh and Egypt through more wonders. Those wonders came in the form of plagues. We are going to read about those plagues now using the bookmarks I handed out at the beginning of class. You each should have a passage marked in your Bible.



## Plagues of Egypt Bookmark

### MATERIALS

- Plagues of Egypt bookmark for each student handed out at the beginning of class

### INSTRUCTIONS

*Have the students line up with their Bibles in order according to the number of the plague on their bookmarks, 1–9. Students will read the Scripture referenced on the bookmark they received. The students can recite the Plagues of Egypt poem on the bookmarks together between reading the Scriptures about each plague.*

*See the Read the Word section below.*

### CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

We are going to see that even as God sent the terrible plagues on Egypt, the pharaoh, the magicians, and the sorcerers still didn't want to admit that God was all-powerful. The sorcerers used their magic tricks and powers to copy the first two plagues. But they finally gave up. They couldn't keep up with the almighty, powerful God—the Creator of the entire universe!



### READ THE WORD

Line up here in the order of the plagues on your bookmarks. You may have more than nine students in your class. In that case those with the same plagues can read the Scriptures together, or you can have them split up the passage among them.

- ? First of all, have any of you heard of the plagues we are reading about? What is a plague? Allow for answers.

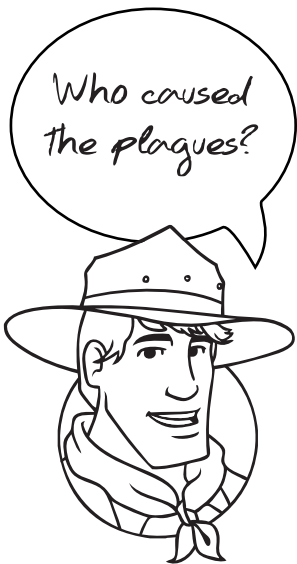
A plague is a disease or disaster that affects many people. God brought ten plagues on Egypt.

Let's start reading with the first plague, Exodus 7:20–21. We'll continue to the ninth plague. In between each plague, we'll all recite the poem on your bookmarks.

*According to the instructions in the activity above, have the students line up in the order of their plague. The class can recite the poem on the bookmark together after each student reads the plague verse from his or her Bible. Students may be seated and you can continue when they are finished.*

Exodus 7:20–21, 8:3–6,  
8:17, 8:24, 9:6, 9:10,  
9:23–25, 10:13–15,  
10:22–23

**Plague:** a disease or disaster that affects many people



## EXAMINE THE WORD

### Observe the Text

Refer to the Bible Study poster to remind your students how to dig deeper into God's Word by asking the right questions.

Very good! Nine terrible plagues and still the pharaoh would not let God's people go.

- ? Who caused each of the plagues to fall on Egypt? *God.*
- ? Whom did God use to warn Pharaoh and bring the plagues on Egypt? *Moses and Aaron.*
- ? Why was God bringing these plagues? *Pharaoh would not obey God and free His people.*
- ? What do these Scriptures and the plagues tell us about God? *Allow for answers.*

These plagues show us God's omnipotence and His sovereignty. He is powerful over all things—even nature. And He controls all things. Only God could bring such terrible disasters like those brought on Egypt.

- ? Why did God send these terrible plagues to Egypt? Look at the poem on your bookmarks to find the answer. *Allow for answers.*

Pharaoh would not listen to or obey God. He did not fear the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He would not let God's people go!

### Discover the Truth

The Israelites had been in bondage in Egypt for more than 200 years when this happened. They had lost their faith in God. But God had promised to show His wonders to the people of Egypt and the Israelites through Moses. These plagues were part of God keeping that promise. God wanted His people to know that He was still in control. These mighty deeds were God's way of showing His people that He was still alive and worthy of their worship. He is the Creator God.

God also wanted to show the Israelites and the Egyptians that their fake gods—their idols—were not real. Their gods were nothing! Only the God of the Bible—the Creator God—is powerful enough to cause all of these plagues. He is the only One who deserves our honor, praise, and worship.



## READ THE WORD

We have read about nine plagues so far. But there were ten! Pharaoh would not obey God. And the tenth and final plague was the worst. It brought God's judgment on Egypt. Let's read about that plague and what the Israelites had to do to escape it.



Turn to Exodus 12. Divide Exodus 12:3–13 for members of the class to read aloud.

Exodus 12:3–13

## EXAMINE THE WORD

### Observe the Text

This was the plague of death. And God provided a way for the Israelites to escape the death He was about to bring on Egypt.

- ? Why is this called the plague of death? What was God planning? Look in Exodus 12:12 for the answer. *God was going to kill the firstborn of every person and animal in Egypt.*
- ? Who was God speaking to? Look at Exodus 12:3. *All the congregation of Israel.*
- ? What was God commanding them to do? It is in verse 3 also. *Take a lamb.*
- ? What kind of lamb did God require them to bring? Look in verse 5. *A lamb without blemish, young, a male, from sheep or goats.*

That's right. Without blemish means a perfect lamb. God wanted them to prepare only the best lamb, not one that was hurt or crippled. The lambs God was demanding could not have anything wrong with them.

- ? What does verse 6 say? What were the people to do with their perfect lambs? *Kill them.*
- ? And what else did God say to do with these lambs? Look in verse 7. *They should put the blood of the lambs on the doorposts and lintels of their houses.*
- ? What is the lintel of the house? *It is the top of the doorway. Show the students what you mean by pointing to the doorposts and lintel on the door to your room.*
- ? And what was the blood from the perfect lamb going to do for them? Why did God command them to do this? Look in verse 13 for the answer. *When God saw the blood on the doorposts, He would pass over that house. He would not kill the firstborn there.*

### Discover the Truth

Do you see? God provided a way for His people to escape the plague of death. They had to be obedient to Him, and something had to die. The blood on the doorposts was a sign that they trusted God and believed in Him. And God passed over the houses with the blood and did not destroy them.



## READ THE WORD

Now we'll read just a couple of verses in the New Testament. We will read John 1:29 and 1 Corinthians 5:7. *Assign two readers to read these verses.*



**Lintel:** the top of a doorway

John 1:29,  
1 Corinthians 5:7

## EXAMINE THE WORD



### Observe the Text

- ? Great. Let's look at John 1:29. Who is speaking in this verse? *John the Baptist.*
- ? Whom did John see coming toward him? *Jesus.*
- ? What did John say when he saw Jesus coming? *Behold! The Lamb of God.*
- ? What did John say Jesus had come to do? *Take away the sin of the world.*

That's right. In this verse John called Jesus the Lamb of God and said that Jesus came to take away sin.

- ? Now everyone look at 1 Corinthians 5:7. We'll take a closer look at this verse. What is Christ called in this verse? *Our Passover.*
- ? And what does this verse say happened to Jesus Christ? Look carefully. *He was sacrificed for us.*

### Discover the Truth

There is a connection here. In the Old Testament God provided a way to save His people—the Israelites in Egypt—through the blood of the perfect lambs they sacrificed—the blood they put on their doorposts and lintels.

Then later, in the New Testament, God tells us that Jesus is the Lamb of God—that He came to take away sin. He was sacrificed for us. He is our Passover.

The Israelites needed a way of escape from the plague of death. We also need an escape from the penalty of sin, which is eternal death. We need this escape because we are all sinners and God hates our sin. And just as God provided a plan of escape for the Israelites through the sacrifice of a lamb without blemish, He has provided a way of salvation for us through the blood of the Savior, Jesus Christ—the perfect Lamb of God. However, Jesus's blood was not put on a doorway but on the Cross. Jesus was the sacrifice for us. It is His death that provides a way for us to be forgiven.

John 3:16

- ? Do any of you know the verse John 3:16 by heart? Let's all turn to that **verse**. *After the students have found the verse in their Bibles, allow those who know it to recite it. If no one does, read it together as a class.*

So you see. God so loved the world that He sent His only Son, Jesus, the Lamb of God, the Passover Lamb, that whoever would believe in Him would be forgiven of their sins and have everlasting life.

The Passover we studied from Exodus—in Egypt with Moses and Aaron—is a picture of what God was already planning to do to save His children many years later and give them eternal life with Him. *Refer to the Exodus and Jesus on the Seven C's Timeline.*





## A Passover for You

### MATERIALS

- Strips of red and brown crepe paper
- Tape
- Large black trash bag

### INSTRUCTIONS

Read Exodus 12:23: “For the Lord will pass through to slay the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood upon the lintel and the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to slay you.”

Let’s imagine what that first Passover may have been like. Some of you will represent Israelites, and some Egyptians. *Pass out the red and brown crepe paper strips. Each student should get three strips of the same color. Show the children how to tape the paper strips on the wall with a piece across the top and two down the sides to create their own doorways.*

Now, stand under your doorway as the destroyer comes by your home. God told the Israelites that when He saw the blood, He would pass over that house and no one in that house would die. The Egyptians,

however, did not put blood on their doorways, so when the destroyer came, the firstborn in each family died.

*Take the opened black trash bag, which will represent the destroyer, and go around the room with it as if it is flying by the doorways. When you come to a brown doorway, say, “I do not see the blood. The firstborn must die.” When you come to a red doorway, say, “You believed God; I see the blood and will pass over your house. You are safe.”*

### CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

That night of the Passover, the firstborn in every Egyptian family died. There was great sorrow in the land of Egypt. But the Israelites believed God and accepted His way of salvation from the plague of death. The blood on the doorposts protected them, and the Lord passed over their homes.

In the same way, those of us who repent of our sins, believe in God, and trust in Jesus Christ’s sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins will be saved from the eternal death that our sin against God deserves.



## Applying God’s Word

### WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

The Israelites had been slaves in Egypt for over 200 years. They had lost their faith in God, but when they cried out, God heard them. God sent Moses and Aaron to fulfill His plan to free the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. The wonders that God brought on Egypt—the ten plagues—revealed to them who God was—the omnipotent, sovereign God of the universe, the one who is worthy of their worship. He is the Creator God.

God also showed the Egyptians that their false gods—their idols—were not real. Their gods were nothing! Only the God of the Bible—the Creator God—was powerful enough to cause all of these plagues.

On the night of Passover, when God brought the plague of death, the Israelites were spared because of the blood of perfect sacrificial lambs. This Passover so long ago pointed to another Passover—our Passover Lamb, Jesus Christ. His death on the Cross provides His people with eternal life—a free gift from God for all who are sorry for their sins, ask God to forgive them, and trust in Jesus for salvation.

## GOD’S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

Many people today don’t believe God’s Word. They try to explain the plagues of Egypt in different ways—not according to what God’s Word says. Some say that the plagues were merely natural events, that the Nile River turned red because of red algae that mixed with the red dirt, and this caused the fish to die and the frogs to leave the river. They look for natural explanations because they reject God’s power. But we know that the God who created the entire universe has the power to do anything He wants.

We can’t let other people change what God’s Word actually says. We have to stand on the truth of the Bible. Because we know God’s Word is true, we know the plagues were extraordinary events and evidence of God’s omnipotent power.



► Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.



### MEMORY VERSE

**Exodus 20:1–5a** And God spoke all these words, saying: “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them, nor serve them.”



### GROUP PRAYER TIME

Be sure to pray with your class before you dismiss them.

- Thank God for His miraculous power that can control all of nature.
- Thank God for giving us a way of escape from the judgment of sin through Jesus, our Passover Lamb.