



# 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, 8:3, 8:17, 8:24, 9:6, 9:10, 9:23, 10:13, 10:22, 12:3–13; John 1:29

### 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

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Students will pick a Plagues of Egypt card from a paper bag and place it in their Bibles to mark Exodus 7. Students will color the Tenth Plague coloring sheet.



### Studying God's Word

page 5

Pharaoh rejected God's message from Moses and Aaron, and 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 Cards

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Students will show the picture and name the plague on the card they were given at the beginning of class.



### Activity 2: A Passover for You

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Students will use red and brown crepe paper streamers to make lintels and doorposts. They will stand under their 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 (preferably on cardstock) and cut out the Plagues of Egypt cards from the Resource DVD-ROM. Make enough cards so each student will get at least one.
- Put cards into a paper bag.
- Print one Tenth Plague coloring sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.

- Plagues of Egypt card for each student
- Paper bag
- Tenth Plague coloring sheet for each student
- Crayons



### STUDYING GOD'S WORD

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

- Student Take Home Sheets



### PLAGUES OF EGYPT CARDS

- Use the Plagues of Egypt cards from the Come On In activity.
- Print one Plagues of Egypt Comments sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM.

- Plagues of Egypt cards
- Plagues of Egypt Comments sheet



### 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 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 their 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
9	Darkness	Ra, god of the sun

### Plague

### Egyptian god

10	Death of the firstborn	Pharaoh himself, held to be a god
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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 . . .

- They will pick a Plagues of Egypt card from the paper bag and mark their Bibles at Exodus 7.
- They will color the Tenth Plague coloring sheet.



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

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.

Listen carefully as I read Exodus 5:1–2. *Read the passage to the students.*

Exodus 5:1–2

## EXAMINE THE WORD

### Observe the Text

This is the first of many meetings between Pharaoh, Moses, and Aaron. Moses and Aaron were speaking for the Lord God of Israel to Pharaoh.

- ? What did the Lord God want the people to do? *Go to the wilderness and hold a feast.*
- ? What did Pharaoh say? Listen to verse 2 again. *Read the verse. Who is the Lord that I should obey Him? I will not let the people go.*

Pharaoh thought he could ignore what God said. He thought since he was king he didn't have to obey anyone. He did not know God.

Instead of obeying God, 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. We'll see that Pharaoh's heart was very hard. He was not going to give in easily—but God is more powerful than any pharaoh. And His plans can never be stopped.



## READ THE WORD

Exodus 7:8–13

Now let's turn to Exodus 7 and I will tell you about the first miraculous sign. This is in Exodus 7:8–13. *Help the students find the passage in their Bibles.*

The Lord told Aaron to throw his rod on the ground in front of Pharaoh. When Aaron obeyed, the rod became a snake!

Pharaoh didn't like that at all. So he called his wise men and magicians and his special magicians called sorcerers.

## EXAMINE THE WORD

### Observe the Text

? What are magicians 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—we know they 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!

? Listen to Exodus 7:12. *Read the verse to the students.* 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 is powerful enough to turn Aaron's rod into a snake and then make Aaron's rod/snake eat the magicians' rods.

? What attribute of God tells us about His amazing power over all things? *Omnipotent. Refer to the Attributes of God poster.*

God is powerful—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.



OMNIPOTENT

*(Refer to Attributes poster.)*



# Plagues of Egypt Cards

## MATERIALS

- Plagues of Egypt cards from the Come On In activity, at least one card per student
- Plagues of Egypt Comments sheet

## INSTRUCTIONS

*You will read each verse listed below. When the students with that card hear that it is their plague, they will stand up and show the picture on the card. After each plague, discuss it according to the Plagues of Egypt Comments sheet.*

*After your discussion of each plague ask, "Then what did Pharaoh have to say?" The students should respond, "Don't know your God and won't obey. All the Hebrews have to stay."*

## 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

I am going to read several verses now. I want you to listen carefully, and when you hear me read about the plague on your card, stand up and show the card to all of us. *Begin reading with Exodus 7:20. Use the Plagues of Egypt Comments sheet to discuss each plague.*

**Exodus 7:20, 8:3, 8:17, 8:24, 9:6, 9:10, 9:23, 10:13, 10:22**

After you name your plague, I will tell you a little more about the plague and ask, "Then what did Pharaoh have to say?" All of you will answer by saying, "Don't know your God and won't obey. All the Hebrews have to stay."

## EXAMINE THE WORD

### Observe the Text

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.*
- ? Who did God use to warn Pharaoh and bring the plagues on Egypt? *Moses and Aaron.*
- ? Why was God bringing these plagues? *Allow for answers. At this point in the lesson, many of the children will understand it was because Pharaoh would not obey God and free His people.*

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. *Refer to the Attributes of God poster.*

➤ After each plague is read and/or discussed, have the children repeat, "Don't know your God and won't obey. All the Hebrews have to stay."

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.



### 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 find out about that plague and what the Israelites had to do to escape it.

Exodus 12:3-13

Turn to Exodus 12. I am going to read some of this chapter to you. *Help the children find the passage in their Bibles.*

### EXAMINE THE WORD

#### Observe the Text

Listen carefully as I read verses 3 through 13. *Read the passage.*

- ? Who was God speaking to here? It is in verse 3. *All the congregation of Israel.*
- ? What animal was God commanding them to get? *A lamb.*
- ? What kind of lamb did God say they had to bring? Listen again to what He says in verse 5. *Read verse 5 again. 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.

- ? Listen to verse 6 again and tell me what the people were to do with their perfect lambs. *Read verse 6. Kill them.*
- ? Listen to verse 7 again and tell me what else God said to do. What did they need to do with the blood of these lambs? *Read 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.*
- ? What was the tenth and final plague from God going to be? Listen as I read Exodus 12:12. *Death to the firstborn of all families and animals in Egypt.*

**Lintel:** the top of a doorway

- ? What would the blood from the perfect lamb do for them? Why did God command them to do this? Look in Exodus 12:13 while I read it. *When God saw the blood on the doorposts, He would pass over that house. He would not kill the firstborn there.*

## Discover the Truth

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. God passed over the houses with the blood and did not destroy them.



## READ THE WORD

Now we'll read one verse in the New Testament. Turn to John 1:29. *Read the verse to the children after they have found it.*

John 1:29

## EXAMINE THE WORD

### Observe the Text

- ? Who is speaking in this verse? *John the Baptist.*
- ? Who 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 calls Jesus the Lamb of God and says that Jesus came to take away sin.

### Discover the Truth

Do you see? In the Old Testament God provided a way to save His people—the Israelites in Egypt—from death 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 told us that Jesus is the Lamb of God—that He came to take away sin. He was sacrificed for us. He is our Passover Lamb.

The Israelites needed a way to escape 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 saved their lives by the blood of a perfect lamb, 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. He died on the Cross. It is His death that provides a way for us to be forgiven. *Show the Lesson Theme poster to illustrate this concept.*





# 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 be Israelites and some of you will be 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.*

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

The Egyptians did not put blood on their doorways, so when the destroyer came, the firstborn in each family died. If you are under a brown doorway, when the destroyer comes by, you will “die” and fall down to the floor! *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.

In the same way, if we repent of our sins, believe in God, and trust in Jesus Christ’s sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins, we will be saved from the eternal death that we deserve because of our sin.



## Applying God’s Word

### WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

Today we read a historical account of how God used Moses, Aaron, and many signs and wonders not only to free His people from Egypt but also to reveal to His people and the entire world that He is the one true God. He is the only one with the power (omnipotence) to accomplish the amazing things we have read about today.

Then we also saw how the first Passover observed so long ago was pointing to another Passover. The Passover lamb pointed to the Lamb of God who takes away sin—Jesus Christ.

Just like the blood of the spotless lamb protected the Israelites from death that night in Egypt, so Jesus’s blood shed on the Cross provides His people with life—eternal life. This eternal life is a free gift from God to all who understand that they are sinners, ask God to forgive them, and believe and trust in Jesus for salvation—salvation we don’t deserve and can’t earn through any works of our own.

## GOD’S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

Many people today don’t believe that God’s Word is true and that His power is beyond what we can understand. You will hear others 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. For example, some say that the Nile River turned red because of red algae that mixed with the red dirt. They think that the red algae caused the fish to die and the frogs to leave the river. Others have said that the darkness of the ninth plague was caused by clouds and smoke from a nearby volcano. These people try to look for natural explanations because they reject God’s omnipotence, including His miraculous signs. But we know that the God who created the entire universe has the power to cause anything He wants. And we know that His Word is true and the most reliable book ever written.

➤ 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.

