

Moses and Pharaoh (The Ten Plagues)

Teacher Pep Talk: Stubborn... Pharaoh was stubborn. In fact, he was SO stubborn that, after he hardened his heart so many times, God finally hardened it for him. God had sent Moses to talk to Pharaoh to ask him to “Let my people go!” But Pharaoh would not. He would not let the Israelite slaves leave Egypt. So, in response, God sent 10 Plagues, each one worse than the last, until finally all of the people of Egypt begged the Israelites to leave! The final price of Pharaoh’s stubborn heart had been exacted from all of Egypt... And that price had been too high to bear!

[NOTES: For older children you may wish to discuss all 10 of the plagues in detail. If so, consider using two sessions to present all of the materials in this lesson. ALSO – For more information on the 10th plague and the PASSOVER, please see Lesson #4.]

You will need: Bible
Other items depending on the activities chosen

Major Points: God Sent Moses to tell Pharaoh “Let my people go!”
Pharaoh Refused to Obey God
God Sent Plagues
Pharaoh Still Refused
God Sent One Last Plague
The Israelites Left Egypt

Scripture Ref: Exodus 7-12

Memory Verse: Exodus 7:16 “The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has sent me to say to you: Let my people go...”

- Lesson: **God Sent Moses to tell Pharaoh “Let my people go!”**
- *[Be sure to start with your Bible sitting on your lap.]*
 - *[Review the Timeline in the classroom, if available.]*
 - Have you ever gotten a telegram? Or a FAX? No? How about an email? Or an “instant message”... Maybe not... Well, those are pretty “old-timey” now. OK... How about a “tweet” or a “text” on your phone? Yes? Great! Now you all know what I mean when I say that someone has “sent you a message.”
 - Back a long time ago, before the Internet and phones (and even before telegrams) you could still send a message to someone by messenger. A messenger actually hand carried a message from one person to another. Usually it was written down. But, sometimes, if the message was short and the messenger was trusted enough, it could just be said out loud to the person.

- One day, God sent such a message. God sent a man named Moses to talk to a man named Pharaoh. Moses was to tell Pharaoh a very short message. It was, “Let my people go!”
- You see, back in ancient Egypt, the Israelites had been slaves for nearly 400 years, and now it was time for them to leave and go to the land that God had promised to give their ancestors.
- So, God sent a messenger to the ruler of Egypt... Pharaoh.
- God sent Moses (his handpicked and trusted messenger) to tell Pharaoh, “Let my people go!”
- God’s people, the Israelites, had been there as slaves long enough. Now, God said, it was time to go.

Pharaoh Refused to Obey God

- So, Pharaoh gets a message from God through His messenger, Moses, to “Let my people go!” What do you think Pharaoh did?
- What would you do? I mean... Pretend you are Pharaoh, the king, and there you are just relaxing (in your palace) and you get a message from God telling you to do something you don’t want to do... What do you do? Do you obey? Do you say... “OK, God... whatever you want... After all, you are God.”
- That would have been the right thing to do. It is always the right thing to obey God and do what He says.
- Unfortunately, Pharaoh didn’t do that. Pharaoh said “No.”
- Pharaoh refused to obey God. He said, “Who is God, that I should obey Him?!” (*Wow, what a bad thing to say... Mistake!*)

God Sent Plagues

- God knew all along that Pharaoh wasn’t going to say “yes.” In fact, God had told Moses ahead of time that Pharaoh was going to say “no.” So, God wasn’t surprised at all that this happened.
- God sent plagues on the land of Egypt... Ten of them! **[Count to 10 together.]**
- Each plague that God sent was worse than the last one.
- Each time God would send His messenger, Moses, back to tell Pharaoh, “Let my people go!” But each time Pharaoh refused.
- The plagues that God sent affected the Egyptians, but not God’s people, the Israelites. *[OPTIONAL: Discuss the first 9 plagues.]*
 - God turned the water of the Nile to blood
 - God sent frogs
 - God sent gnats
 - God sent flies
 - God sent a plague on their livestock
 - God sent boils (that broke out on men and animals)
 - God sent hail
 - God sent locusts
 - God sent darkness that covered the land for 3 days

Pharaoh Still Refused

- Each time God sent a plague Pharaoh would call for Moses and ask him to stop the plague.
- Usually Pharaoh would promise to let the people go. But as soon as the plague stopped, Pharaoh would change his mind.
- The Bible says that Pharaoh “hardened his heart” and would not let the Israelites leave, even though he had promised to do so.
- God knew all about Pharaoh and what kind of man he was. God knew that Pharaoh was going to refuse.
- **[Optional]** In fact God said of Pharaoh “*I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.*” **(Romans 9:17)**
- With each plague Pharaoh became more and more hardened. While other people, including all of Pharaoh’s advisors, wanted to let the Israelites go, Pharaoh still stubbornly refused.
- Eventually, the Bible says, that **God** hardened Pharaoh’s heart.

God Sent One Last Plague (or Judgment)

- Up to now God had sent 9 plagues **[Count up to 9 together.]**
- There was one more plague to come.
- It was the WORST one of all.
- God warned all of His people about it. They were to take certain steps to avoid this plague, or it would affect them as well.
- God’s people, the Israelites, obeyed all of God’s instructions, so that the plague would not affect them.
- That night each of the firstborn sons in Egypt died. (But not the in the Israelites’ households, who had obeyed the instructions.)
- From the poorest to the richest, every family in Egypt was affected. Even Pharaoh’s firstborn son died!

The Israelites Left Egypt

- About midnight a loud wailing came from all over Egypt, because there was not a house without someone dead.
- During the night Pharaoh called Moses (and his brother Aaron) to the palace. He told Moses to take God’s people and GO!
- So, finally Pharaoh let God’s people go!
- God had instructed the Israelites to ask their Egyptian neighbors for gold and silver items, and for clothing.
- The Egyptians gave them all of these things!
- The Egyptians wanted the Israelites to hurry and leave! (*They were afraid WORSE would happen if the Israelites stayed!*)
- So, the Israelites left in the middle of the night, and they took with them all the gold, silver, and clothing they had been given.
- When they left, the Israelites had lived in Egypt for 430 years!
- God kept His promise to bring His people out of Egypt!

Let's pray and thank God that He kept His promise to bring His people out of Egypt!

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you that you kept your promise to bring your people out of Egypt.
Thank you that you always keep your promises.
Thank you for loving us.
We love you back.
Amen.

Suggested Activities: *(Choose 1-2 that you think will work well with your group.)*

Nine Out Of Ten – *The children will learn more about the first 9 plagues.*

Before Class – Think up ways of demonstrating or acting out the first 9 plagues (in your classroom). Bring any needed items with you to class that day.

During Class – Discuss the first 9 plagues in a little more detail than you had time during the lesson. Tell the class you will act them out a little. **(Suggestions follow.)**

God turned the water of the Nile to blood – Add red food coloring to a glass of water. *(This won't make it undrinkable, but it will give the class a picture of how it looked.)*

God sent frogs – Ask someone to make a frog sound, or have the class hop like frogs.

God sent gnats – Explain that gnats are very tiny; let the children pretend to swat gnats. *(Make sure you only swat the gnats that land on you... not on your neighbor! ☺)*

God sent flies – Ask the children to make buzzing sounds like flies; try to "catch" a fly.

God sent a plague on the livestock – Talk about different kinds of livestock (cows, goats, sheep, etc.) Make sounds for different kinds of animals. Guess the animals.

God sent boils (that broke out on men and animals) – Explain that these are sores.

God sent hail – Explain that hail is ice that falls from the sky. These were BIG pieces. Pretend to walk around and "dodge" big pieces of falling ice. (Be careful!)

God sent locusts – Locusts buzz around and eat everything. Ask for volunteers to buzz around the room pretending to look for things to eat. *(Don't eat the chair legs! ☺)*

God sent darkness (that covered the land for 3 days) – Have the children sit while you darken the room. **(Consider covering windows earlier.)** Discuss how you feel when it is dark. What if the sun didn't shine at all for 3 days? That might be very scary.

Moses: The Messenger – *The children will play a game and learn about messages.*

Before Class – Consider writing down messages for your messenger to remember and to carry back to the group. For at least one of the messages, you might consider using the one God gave Moses to tell Pharaoh: "Let my people go!"

During Class – Have the children sit as you tell them that "Moses was God's messenger to Pharaoh." Explain that you will all learn a little more about messages and how the messenger can be very important. Ask for two volunteers. One stands on the far side of the room. One is the messenger. The messenger goes to the person on the far side of the room. That person whispers a sentence *(which may have been written down on a piece of paper earlier by the teacher)*. The messenger must remember the message and bring it back to the group. Then the messenger says the message out loud. Did the messenger get it correct? How hard is that? Ask for other volunteers. Play again!

Let My People Go! – *The children will practice and learn the Memory Verse.*

Before Class: Write on a banner or large piece of paper the words “Let my people go!” Bring the banner with you to class. If your class has children in it who can already read, they will enjoy getting to read the banner. Those who do not read yet, will enjoy getting to learn to “read” a few new words. Consider displaying the banner in your classroom.

During Class: Ask the children to sit down while you get ready for this activity. Ask for two volunteers to hold the banner. Also ask for one volunteer to be Pharaoh. Now tell the children that you are going to pretend to be Moses (who acted as God’s messenger to Pharaoh.) The rest of the children can pretend to be Hebrews! Now (as if you are explaining to Pharaoh) say, “*The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has sent me to say to you; Let my people go...*” As you say the words, **point** to explain who you are talking about. **For example:** When you say “The LORD,” point up. When you say “the Hebrews”, point at the children. When you say “me”, point to yourself. When you say “you”, point at “Pharaoh.” And when you say “Let my people go” point to the children. Have all the children say “Let my people go!” with you. Talk about the words “Let my people go.” “Read” each word from the banner. Talk about how these words were God’s message to Pharaoh. Did Pharaoh listen? (*No, he didn’t.*) Now have someone else volunteer to be Moses and say the verse out loud again. Don’t forget to point!

Make your Own Banner! – *The children will create a banner saying “Let my people go”*

Before Class: Make copies of the activity sheet for each child in class. OR Create a “banner”, by stapling two pieces of construction paper together lengthwise (with one staple at the top and one staple at the bottom of the sheets.) OR Cut long sections of butcher paper for each child. Provide markers, crayons, glitter, etc. Make an example.

During Class: Explain that we should always listen when God tells us to do something. Moses was worried at first about going to Pharaoh to talk to him, like God had asked him to do, but he obeyed God anyway. Pharaoh didn’t want to do what God asked him to do, and so he did NOT obey God. Which one did what was right? (Moses.) Hand out the banners. Distribute the markers and crayons. Use the activity sheet or ask the children to write “Let my people go” on their banner. (Help the younger ones.) Show the children the example you made. Explain how you did yours and how theirs may be the same or different. Allow the children to create and decorate their banners.

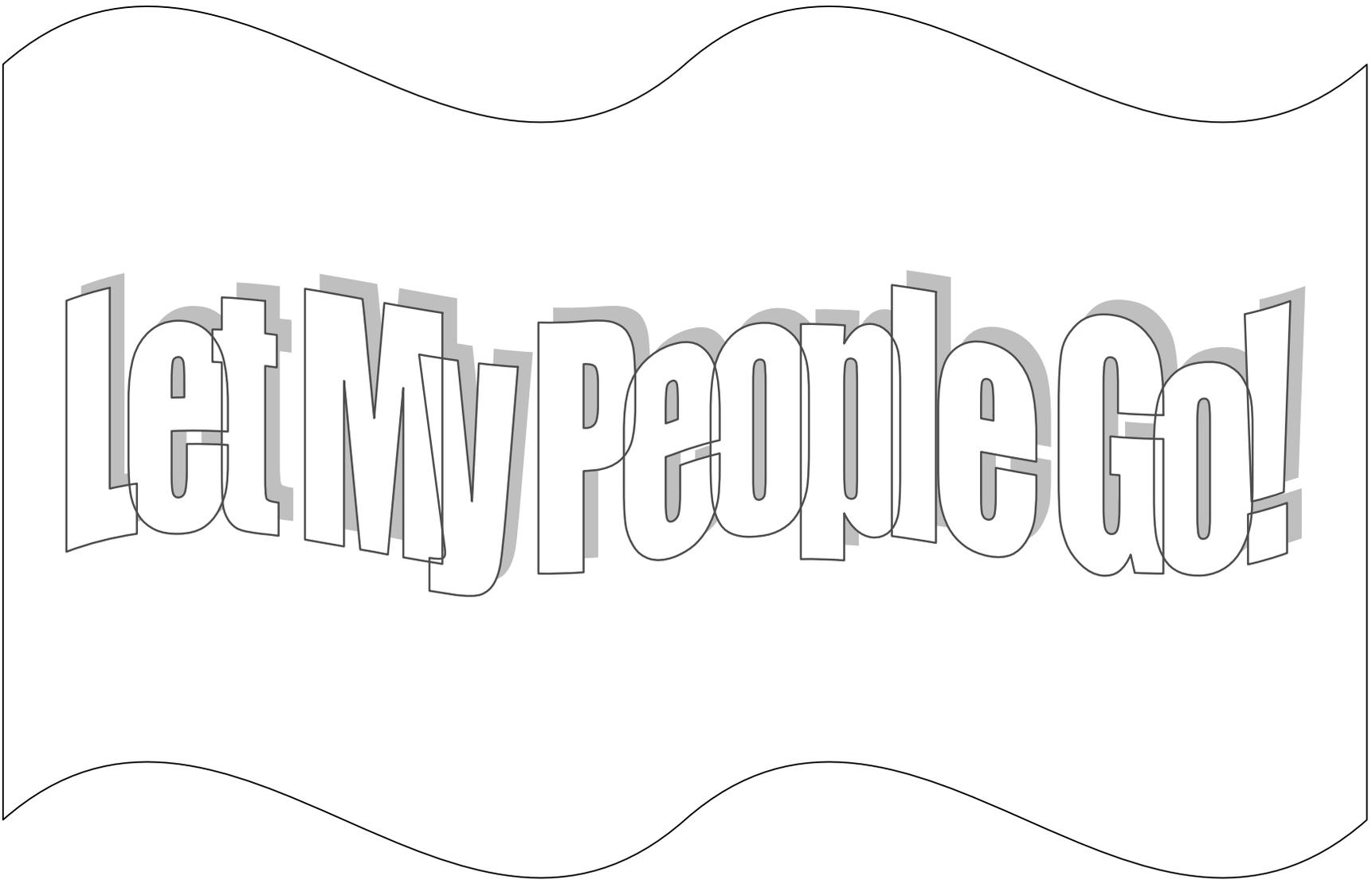
Ten Plagues – *The children will do an activity sheet about the various plagues.*

Before Class: Make copies of the activity sheet for each child. Provide crayons or markers for the children to color in the various sections on the sheet for each plague.

During Class: Discuss the 10 plagues and how each plague was worse than the last. Hand out the activity sheets. Have the children draw/ color in each of the squares as you go along together, OR set up centers around the room where you do a square or two at each one. Be creative! (Use markers/ watercolors/ stickers/ glitter/ glue, etc.)

Younger Children: Count to 10 together. Write the numbers 1-10 in each square.

Older Children: Have them follow these directions with you: 1) Draw the Nile; color it red. 2) Draw a frog. 3) Draw some gnats. (Tiny dots.) 4) Draw some flies. (Larger dots.) 5) Draw a sheep (Or glue on a cotton ball) OR Draw a cow. 6) Color a circular sore (Icky!) 7) Draw hail falling out of the sky. 8) Draw a locust (It looks sort of like a grasshopper.) 9) Darkness – Color the square dark. 10) Death – Draw a cross.



Let My People Go!

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10