

MOSES RETURNS TO EGYPT: THE 10 PLAGUES

God chose Moses to lead Israel out of Egypt. Pharaoh and the Egyptians would see the power of God through the 10 plagues and other events in Exodus 7-12.

by Shelby Faith

QUIZ TIME

What did Aaron's rod turn into when he threw it down before Pharaoh?

When God told Moses to return to Egypt, Moses must have been afraid. He had left Egypt in fear of being killed by Pharaoh. He now had a wife and two sons. He probably wondered how his brother, Aaron, and the others would treat him. He had been raised as an Egyptian. Now he would be the leader of the Israelites.

In spite of his concerns, Moses returned to Egypt. He gathered all the elders of Israel together, including Aaron, his brother. He told them, "God is going to deliver you out of Egypt." This must have brought joy to the people of God when they heard this good news!

Moses was about 80 years old, and his brother Aaron was about 83 years old at this time (Exodus 7:7).

WARNING PHARAOH

Then Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "God says, 'Let My people go so that they may have a feast to Me in the wilderness.'"

Pharaoh said, "Who is this God that I should obey Him? I don't know Him, and I won't let Israel go."

Aaron threw down his rod before Pharaoh. God made it become a snake. Pharaoh called his wise men, sorcerers and magicians. Every man threw down his rod, and they became snakes. But Aaron's rod was more powerful and swallowed up their rods!

FIRST PLAGUE: WATER TURNS TO BLOOD

Moses then warned Pharaoh that the river would turn into blood if he refused to let Israel go.

Aaron struck the river. It immediately turned into blood. The Egyptians could not drink the water. All the fish died, and the river smelled bad. The river was like this for seven days.

This plague showed that God is more powerful than Egypt's pagan god of the river Nile. (The rest of the plagues were also against Egypt's gods.)

SECOND PLAGUE: FROGS

Next frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. They were everywhere—in their homes, beds, ovens and dishes. Pharaoh said he would let the people go. Then God

destroyed all the frogs, and only those in the river were left. But Pharaoh changed his mind.

THIRD PLAGUE: LICE

Next came the plague of lice, which were all over the people and animals. Everyone was miserable. Still, Pharaoh would not let them go.

FOURTH PLAGUE: FLIES

After that God sent swarms of flies covering the people, food, houses and the ground. Egypt was covered with flies everywhere, but the Israelites had no flies near them or their homes. Again Pharaoh would not let Israel go.

FIFTH PLAGUE: DEADLY DISEASE

Next Moses warned Pharaoh that God would send a severe disease to kill their livestock. The next day Egypt's flocks died. But Pharaoh did not let God's people go.

SIXTH PLAGUE: PAINFUL BOILS

God then sent many boils on every person and animal in Egypt. These boils broke out into sores so painful the people could not even stand up. Still Pharaoh did not obey God.

SEVENTH PLAGUE: GIANT HAIL

Moses then said to Pharaoh, "Tomorrow God will cause very heavy hail to come down on the land. Gather your flocks from the fields and bring them home. All people and flocks still in the fields will die from the hail."

The next day giant hail struck throughout Egypt. All the people and animals still in the field died. The hail struck every plant and broke down every tree. There was no hail in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel lived.

"It is enough," Pharaoh said. "I will let you go." But after the hail stopped, Pharaoh changed his mind and wouldn't let them go.

EIGHTH PLAGUE: LOCUSTS

Then came the plague of locusts. They covered the land so heavy that it became dark. They ate every plant and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left. There were no green leaves left on the trees and the plants.

Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said he was sorry. But after the locusts were gone, Pharaoh again changed his mind and wouldn't let Israel go.

NINTH PLAGUE: DARKNESS

Next came the plague of darkness. God said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand; there will be darkness all over Egypt." Darkness settled upon Egypt, and the Egyptians couldn't see anything for three days. They couldn't see each other and

didn't leave their homes. But the people of Israel had light in their homes and could see.

Before each of these plagues happened, God continued to send Moses and Aaron to warn Pharaoh, saying, "Let My people go." Each time Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he refused to let Israel leave. Sometimes in the midst of a plague Pharaoh would promise to let Israel go, but afterward he would change his mind.

God knew that the 10th plague would cause Pharaoh such sorrow that he would finally let Israel go free.

10TH PLAGUE: DEATH OF FIRSTBORNS

Moses called for all the elders of Israel and told them what God wanted them to do next.

"Each man is to take a lamb without any defects and kill it on the 14th day of the first month at twilight. Paint the blood over the top and two side posts of the doorway of your houses.

"Don't go out of your house till morning. Roast the lamb and eat it quickly with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Put your shoes on your feet and your staff in your hand. Be ready to leave. This is the Lord's Passover.

"At midnight when the Egyptians' firstborn children die, God will see the blood and pass over your houses. Death will not come near you."

At midnight all the firstborn of Egypt died. Pharaoh's firstborn died. There was a great cry and moaning throughout Egypt. In every house someone died.

But not one of God's people died that night.

Pharaoh was in deep sorrow since his firstborn child was dead. He quickly called for Moses and Aaron. He told them, "Go and serve the Lord, as you have said, both you and all the children of Israel. And take your flocks and herds with you."

FREE AT LAST!

Israel was finally free to leave Egypt. The people packed up their belongings and gathered all their flocks and herds. They took their bread dough before it had time to rise.

By that night they were ready to leave. They were free to go worship God in the wilderness.

What a time of great joy and celebration for them as they left Egypt with their hands and hearts held high!

REMEMBERING THE PASSOVER

God made a covenant with His people. "When you come into the land which the Lord gives you, you shall keep this service. When your children ask, 'What does this service mean?' you shall say, 'It is the Passover sacrifice of the Lord, for He passed over the houses of the children of Israel when He struck the firstborn of the Egyptians.'"

QUIZ TIME

Where did God instruct the Israelites to put the blood of the lamb?

QUIZ TIME

What was different about the bread dough when the Israelites packed up to leave Egypt?

QUESTIONS

Here are some questions to think about or talk about as a family:

1. When Moses went to Pharaoh and asked him to let Israel leave Egypt, what was Pharaoh's answer?
2. How many plagues did God strike Egypt with before Pharaoh allowed Israel to go?
3. Can you name some of the plagues?
4. What animal did God tell Israel to kill?
5. What was the blood supposed to cover?
6. What was going to happen at midnight?
7. Who is a "firstborn"? Are you a firstborn? If not, who is the firstborn in your family?
8. How do you think the Israelites felt when they were finally leaving Egypt and were free?

See more about the first Passover in our Bible story article "[A Story of the First Passover](#)." Read more about the Passover and its meaning today in our article "[Passover: What Did Jesus Do for You?](#)"



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