THE CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

**CHILDREN’S MEETING LESSON**

**DATE:** April 2, 2017

**SUBJECT: GOD’S CALLING IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: God Called Moses (3 of 3)—Plagues upon Egypt**

**SCRIPTURE:** Exodus 5:1-23; 6:1-13; 7:1**—**10:29 *[Please note: In a different series of lessons, the ten plagues on Egypt are covered in much more detail. In this lesson, each plague is summarized by a short paragraph.]*

**AIM:** To realize that our God is a great and powerful God who love and cares for His people, and that He is righteous.

**MEMORY VERSES TO CHOOSE FROM:** Psalms 9:7-8a (**7** But Jehovah sits enthroned forever; He has established His throne for judgment. **8** And it is He who judges the world with righteousness;...); Psalms 119:137 (You are righteous, O Jehovah; And Your judgments are upright.); Hebrews 4:7b (Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.); Jeremiah 10:6 (There is none like You, O Jehovah; You are great, And Your name is great in might.); Romans 8:31b (If God is for us, who can be against us?)

**SONG SUGGESTIONS:** 25 (I Believe God); 4611 (My God is So Great); 6702 (The All-Sufficient God); 91 (Jesus’ Love is Very Wonderful); 2807 (Go Down, Moses); 2510 (Four Hundred Years); 153 (Obey His Call); 5223 (Our God Doesn’t Give Up); 4607 (Moses and God); 2204 (Every Little Hair)

**CRAFT IDEAS:** There are many creative ideas online relating to the ten plagues. Please check for accuracy and make sure the images are age-appropriate.

**BACKGROUND:** When God called Moses from the midst of the burning bush, He made Himself known as the God of his forefathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God had promised to give the land of Canaan to His people. The Lord had heard the cry of the children of Israel from their suffering under slavery and had called Moses to deliver them out of the bondage of the Egyptians. The Lord told Moses what to say before the elders of Israel and asked him to go with his brother Aaron, who would speak for him. Eventually, the children of Israel believed Moses and worshipped God.

**CONTENT:** Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and told him that Jehovah the God of Israel said, “Let My people go that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.” God wanted His people to serve Him. But Pharaoh arrogantly answered, “Who is Jehovah that I should listen to His voice to let Israel go? I do not know Jehovah, and I also will not let Israel go.” Moses and Aaron answered, “The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us go a three days’ journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to Jehovah our God;….”

But Pharaoh didn’t want to release the children of Israel from their work; rather, he gave them more work. Now, when they made bricks, straw was no longer given to them. They had to go around the land and gather the straw themselves but they still had to make the same quota of bricks as before! When they couldn’t meet their quota of bricks, Pharaoh’s taskmasters beat the officers of the children of Israel and asked why they hadn’t finished their work. The officers cried out to Pharaoh about their unfair treatment but he cruelly insisted that they finish their quota. The officers then complained to Moses and Aaron and blamed them for their trouble with Pharaoh. So Moses went back to Jehovah and said, “Lord, why have You mistreated this people? Why is it that You sent me? … You have not delivered Your people at all.”

Jehovah then said to Moses, “Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh … I am Jehovah. And I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as the All-sufficient God; … And I also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, … And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, … Therefore say to the children of Israel, I am Jehovah, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment … And I will bring you to the land which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

When Moses spoke this to the people, they did not listen to him because of their exasperation of spirit and their harsh bondage. Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, “Go, speak to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land.” But Moses told Jehovah that the children of Israel were not listening to him. How then would Pharaoh listen to him? Jehovah gave Moses and Aaron a charge for the children of Israel, and for Pharaoh, to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

Then Jehovah said to Moses, “See, I have made you God to Pharaoh; and Aaron will be your prophet. You shall speak all that I command you, and Aaron your brother shall speak to Pharaoh, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land. And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart and will multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh will not listen to you; and I will lay My hand upon Egypt and bring forth My armies, My people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of judgment. And the Egyptians will know that I am Jehovah, when I stretch forth My hand upon Egypt and bring out the children of Israel from among them.” Moses and Aaron did just as Jehovah commanded them. Moses was 80 years old and Aaron 83 years old when they spoke to Pharaoh.

**The First Plague—Blood (Exodus 7:15-25).**Jehovah told Moses to stand on the bank of the Nile River to meet Pharaoh in the morning. Moses told Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go, else he would strike the water with his staff and the water would turn to blood. But Pharaoh’s heart was hardened and he didn’t listen. So Moses told Aaron to take his staff and stretch out his hand over the waters of Egypt: rivers, watercourses, pools, and reservoirs of water. And all the water in them turned to blood. And the fish that were in the foul river died and the Egyptians couldn’t drink water from it. There was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.

**The Second Plague—Frogs (Exodus 8:1-15).**Then Jehovah told Moses to go to Pharaoh, and say, “…Let My people go that they may serve Me. But if you refuse to let them go, I am now going to smite all your territory with frogs.” Just as Jehovah said, frogs came from the river into Pharaoh’s house, into his bedroom and upon his bed, into the houses of his servants and upon his people, into his ovens and kneading bowls, and even upon him and upon his people and upon all His servants. Pharaoh asked Moses and Aaron to pray to Jehovah to take the frogs away. So the frogs died in the houses and in the courts and in the fields, and the people gathered them in heaps, and the land stank. But then, Pharaoh hardened his heart again and did not let the people go.

**The Third Plague—Lice (Exodus 8:16-19).**Jehovah then told Moses to tell Aaron to stretch out his hand with his staff and strike the dust of the earth. All the dust of the earth became lice on man and beast and throughout all the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh’s heart hardened and he still did not listen to Moses and Aaron.

**The Fourth Plague—Flies (Exodus 8:20-32).** Jehovah again told Moses to tell Pharaoh that Jehovah said to let His people go that they may serve Him. If he didn’t, He would at once send swarms of flies against him, his servants, his people, and his houses. The houses of the Egyptians would be full of flies as well as the ground they would stand on. Pharaoh wouldn’t listen, so heavy swarms of flies came into Pharaoh’s house and his servants’ houses. And all through Egypt, the land was ruined because of the swarms of flies. Again Pharaoh asked Moses to pray to Jehovah. So Moses prayed and the swarms of flies were removed. But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and he did not let the people go.

**The Fifth Plague—Pestilence (Exodus 9:1-7).**Jehovah told Moses to go to Pharaoh and tell him to let His people go that they may serve Him. If not, then His hand would be on Pharaoh’s livestock in the field: horses, donkeys, camels, herds, and the flocks. He would strike them with a very severe sickness (pestilence). The next day, all the livestock of Egypt died! But Pharaoh’s heart was stubborn, and he did not let the people go.

**The Sixth Plague—Boils (Exodus 9:8-12).** Then Jehovah told Moses and Aaron to take handfuls of ashes from a furnace and have Moses sprinkle it toward heaven in the sight of Pharaoh. It would become fine dust and would become boils breaking out on the people and on the animals in Egypt. But Jehovah hardened Pharaoh’s heart and he didn’t listen to them, just as Jehovah had said.

**The Seventh Plague—Hail (Exodus 9:13-35).**Jehovah told Moses to tell Pharaoh to let His people go that they may serve Him. Pharaoh was still exalting himself against His people by not letting them go. Jehovah told Moses to tell him, “Tomorrow … I am going to cause very heavy hail to fall … such as never occurred in Egypt … until now.” Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven. When he did, Jehovah sent thunder and hail, and fire came down on the earth. It was very heavy hail with fire flashing continually in the midst of it. The hail struck everything that was in the field, both man and beast, throughout all the land of Egypt. It struck all the vegetation of the field and shattered every tree of the field. Again, Pharaoh asked Moses to pray to Jehovah. Moses prayed and the hail and thunder and rain ceased, but Pharaoh’s heart hardened, and he did not let the children of Israel go.

**The Eighth Plague—Locusts (Exodus 10:1-20).**Then Jehovah told Moses to go to Pharaoh again. If Pharaoh still refused to let His people go, He would bring swarming locusts to cover the surface of the land. They would eat every tree that had escaped the hail. And his houses, and his servants’ houses and the houses of all the Egyptians would be filled with them. But Pharaoh was still stubborn and wouldn’t listen. So Jehovah told Moses to stretch out his hand over the land of Egypt. And Jehovah drove an east wind all day and all night and in the morning the east wind had brought the swarming locusts. They went up over all the land of Egypt and covered the surface of the whole land, so that the land was darkened. The locusts ate all the vegetation of the land and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left. Nothing green remained. Again, Pharaoh asked Moses to pray to Jehovah. So Jehovah changed the wind into a very strong west wind and all the locusts were driven into the Red Sea. But Jehovah hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he didn’t let the people go.

**The Ninth Plague—Darkness (Exodus 10:21-29).**Then Jehovah told Moses to stretch out his hand toward heaven so that there would be darkness over the land of Egypt, even a darkness that could be felt. There was thick darkness throughout all the land of Egypt for 3 days. The people could not see one another, nor did anyone rise up for 3 full days. But Jehovah hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he was not willing to let them go.

**The Tenth Plague—the Death of the Firstborn (Exodus 11:1—13:22).**Finally, Jehovah sent one more plague upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt which was the last and most terrible of all. All the firstborn in the land of Egypt would die: from Pharaoh’s firstborn to the firstborn of the female slave. Even all the firstborn of the cattle would die. When this happened as Jehovah said, there would be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as not been or ever will be again.

After this last plague, Pharaoh knew that Jehovah was the Lord and that He should be feared. Therefore he let the children of Israel go to serve Jehovah.

**SUGGESTED APPLICATIONS TO CHOOSE FROM:** *Please pray and fellowship over which applications to cover for your group of children. Please do not feel obligated to cover all the suggested applications.*

* **Our God is a great God.** There is only one true God and there is no one like Him. Pharaoh was the ruler of Egypt, which was the leading society at the time. He arrogantly asked in a challenging way: Who is Jehovah that I should listen to His voice to let Israel go? Through the ten plagues, Pharaoh and all the people could see God’s greatness and His vast power. When we feel powerless and helpless, we need to realize we have a GREAT God that is for us!
* **God cares for His people.** God did not forget His people in Egypt. He prepared someone to lead them and advocate for them. When the stubborn Pharaoh repeatedly refused to let God’s people go to serve God, God sent plagues. But the terrible plagues did not affect God’s people. The plagues only came upon Pharaoh’s people, and God took care of His own people.
* **God is righteous and we need to obey Him.** Our God is a righteous God—He wants us to repent of any sins, including disobedience. Jehovah gave Pharaoh many opportunities to listen and obey but he refused. He was extremely stubborn, even after seeing supernatural plagues sent from God. When things got bad, he would give in temporarily, but when things got back to normal, he became very stubborn again. He was stubborn to the point of causing the Egyptians and the land to suffer tremendously. We should not be stubborn like Pharaoh, insisting on our way even when we are wrong. We belong to God, andwe should obey Him and those who represent Him (parents, grandparents, teachers, etc.).

Adapted from the Church in New York City’s Children’s Meeting lessons: 4/30/88; 5/8/88; 4/22/94, 4/29/94; 3/1/98; 3/8/98; 3/15/98; 4/23/00; 4/9/06, 4/15/12