

Zoom Sunday School: 28 June 2020

When Moses got back to Egypt, he and Aaron (his brother) first went to God's people, the Hebrews. They told them about God's special name and pointed out that this meant that God was with them, even when it didn't feel like he was. The people were thrilled that God had remembered them and that he had sent a leader to rescue them. They praised God.

Then Aaron and Moses went off to see Pharaoh. That wasn't a successful visit! Pharaoh simply looked down his nose at them. "Why should I listen to your god? I don't know him," he sneered. "Tell these Hebrews to get back to work at once! They aren't going anywhere!"

Pharaoh decided that to prevent these ideas spreading, the Hebrews must be punished. He doubled their work. From then on, he ordered, they would also have to gather the straw they needed, before making their bricks. But they must still make the same number of bricks as they had always done.

When the Hebrews complained, Pharaoh told them they were just being lazy! The Hebrews forgot that they had praised God for sending them a leader and instead blamed Moses for making their lives worse. And Moses relayed this to God, begging him to intervene.

But God replied by sending Moses back to Pharaoh. It was time to show Pharaoh who he was. They turned a staff (stick) into a snake, but Pharaoh wasn't impressed; his wise men could do that too. Then Aaron's snake ate up the Egyptian snakes, showing that God was more powerful. Pharaoh, however, was not impressed yet; he refused to change his mind.

Yet God had everything in hand. He was going to prove to Pharaoh that he was the real God, more powerful than any Egyptian idol, such as the Nile and the sun. Pharaoh and the people of Egypt would be punished for their cruelty. God does not tolerate unkindness.

So God sent 10 plagues to trouble the part of the land where the Egyptians lived:

1. The Nile turned to **blood** – no fresh life-giving water, just smelly, stinking fish.
2. *So:* the **frogs** left the river and overran the land, sheltering in beds, bowls, everywhere
3. *So:* **Gnats** or midgets *and*
4. **Flies** bred in the rotting fish and frogs and swarmed everywhere
5. *So:* **disease** spread, killing first **herds** and
6. Causing **Boils** to develop on humans and animals
7. Tremendous storms brought **hail** which destroyed everything in the fields
8. And blew in **locusts** who devoured other green shoots
9. And then **darkness** for three days

Each time Pharaoh promised they could go, but broke his promise when God set things right. Finally he told Moses to go away and to stay away. But God had one final plague.

Bible readings for this week:

Monday: Exodus 5: 15-23

Tuesday: Exodus 6: 1-13

Wednesday: Exodus 9: 1-7

Thursday: Exodus 10:7, 12-20

Friday: Exodus 10:21-29