

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
TEACHER'S PACKET

Kindergarten

Sunday Morning

Study 17

The Plagues

The Plagues

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective To continue the story of Moses by studying the plagues that God sends against Egypt.

Key Verses

Exodus 8-10—Main Teaching Passage

Memory Verse - Proverbs 29:25 (December Memory Verse)

"The fear of man brings a snare,
But whoever trusts in the Lord shall be safe."

Hook

Write a list of the first nine plagues on the board (see the "Look" section for a list of them). Give all of the students a blank piece of paper and tell them to draw a picture of one of the things that they see on the board.

When the students are done, have them share their creations with the class.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

Last week, we saw that in Moses' first confrontation with Pharaoh, God turned the Nile River into blood. This was the first of the Ten Plagues. In Exodus chapters 8-10, we read about the second through ninth plagues God sent against Egypt. Notice that after each of the plagues, Pharaoh was given an opportunity to release the Hebrews over to the Lord. All of this pain and suffering could have been avoided if Pharaoh had obeyed the Lord and let the people go. Pharaoh, however, after having seen the power of God demonstrated, hardened his heart and determined that He would never release the Hebrews, no matter what happened.

After Pharaoh hardened his own heart five times, we see that God then hardened Pharaoh's heart after each of the final four plagues in this study. It's also interesting to note the actions of the sorcerers after the first three plagues. They demonstrated to Pharaoh that they could copy the miracles of turning water into blood and bringing frogs up out of the land. But when God turned the dust into lice, when God literally took dirt and made it alive (as Adam in the Garden of Eden), the sorcerers were unable to do the same. They commented, "This is the finger of God."

LOOK

When Moses stood before God at the burning bush, he only needed to experience the power of God once before he knew that he should do what God said. Unfortunately for Pharaoh, this could not be said about him. You would think that after God had turned all of the water in Egypt into blood, Pharaoh would have done anything that God told him to do. However, the Bible says that Pharaoh "hardened his heart." This means that Pharaoh said to himself, "No matter what happens, I am NOT going to do things God's way. I am going to do things the way that I want to do them." In fact, God was going to give Pharaoh ten chances to see His power, to understand exactly what God wanted, and to do it. Pharaoh refused. Every time that Moses went before Pharaoh and told him that God was going to send a plague and that if Pharaoh wanted to escape it, all he had to do was release the Hebrews, Pharaoh would not listen.

God sent ten different plagues to show Pharaoh that He was not to be refused. Each of these ten plagues would prove to Pharaoh, and the people, that He is the one true God over all the earth. The Ten plagues that God sent were:

1. Turning the water into blood
2. A plague of frogs
3. Turning the dust into lice

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK (Continued)

4. A plague of flies
5. Death of the livestock of the Egyptians
6. A plague of boils
7. A plague of hail and fire
8. A plague of locusts
9. Darkness across all of the land
10. The death of the first born

We will talk about the final plague next week.

The important question we have to ask ourselves is, are we going to be like Moses or Pharaoh? Will we harden our heart toward the Lord and refuse to listen to Him no matter what happens? Or, when we come into contact with the true and living God, will we be like Moses? Will we follow the Lord and His commandments?

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

Review the lesson by going through the plagues. After each one, ask if Pharaoh had a chance to repent and whether or not he responded.

Pray: Thank the Lord for His word to us. Praise Him for His love towards those who follow Him. Ask Him for help in following His Word.

Parent Question: Why didn't Pharaoh let the Hebrews go?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Exodus 8 and 10 by David Guzik

Exodus 8 - Plagues Upon Egypt

A. The second plague: Frogs.

1. (1-4) The warning of the second plague.

And the LORD spoke to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD: "Let My people go, that they may serve Me. But if you refuse to let *them* go, behold, I will smite all your territory with frogs. So the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into your house, into your bedroom, on your bed, into the houses of your servants, on your people, into your ovens, and into your kneading bowls. And the frogs shall come up on you, on your people, and on all your servants.'" "

a. **Go to Pharaoh:** This series of plagues will end with death coming to almost every home in Egypt. God could have brought that terrible last plague early in this series, but did not - and did not for a determined purpose. God used this series of plagues to glorify Himself (especially above the gods of the Egyptians), *and* to give Pharaoh chance to repent.

i. We should see the good mercy of God in doing this. He might have gone directly to the more severe judgment, but instead gave Pharaoh many chances to repent and change.

b. **I will smite all your territory with frogs:** God threatened a plague of **frogs** for a specific reason. The Egyptian goddess *Heqet* (or, *Heket*) was always pictured with the head of a frog. Among the ancient Egyptians, frogs were considered sacred and could not be killed.

i. Egyptians worshipped the frog as a female goddess because frogs were common around the Nile, because they reproduced rapidly, and because being amphibians they are part of two worlds, creatures of both land and water.

2. (5-7) God brings frogs upon the land through Moses and Aaron and the magicians of Egypt do the same.

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your hand with your rod over the streams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and cause frogs to come up on the land of Egypt.'" So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs on the land of Egypt.

a. **The frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt:** Since the Egyptians worshipped the frog, God gave them a plague of frogs. We see both God's determined plan and His sense of humor.

i. "Though he is the Lord of hosts he has no need of powerful armies, the ministry of angels, or the thunderbolts of justice to punish a sinner or a sinful nation; the *frog* or the *fly* in his hands is a sufficient instrument of vengeance." (Clarke)

ii. "Thus the first and this second plague are about the water; the third and fourth about the earth; the five next about the air; and the last about man." (Trapp)

b. **And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs:** The ability of the magicians to do the same **with their enchantments** points to a supernatural power present; this wasn't the work of a skilled illusionist, this was occult power at work.

i. For all their occult powers, all the magicians could do was make *more* frogs! They could only make the problem worse; yet their work gave Pharaoh an excuse to further harden his heart.

3. (8-15) Pharaoh asks Moses for help.

Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, "Entreat the LORD that He may take away the frogs from me and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may sacrifice to the LORD." And Moses said to Pharaoh, "Accept the honor of saying when I shall intercede for you, for your servants, and for your people, to destroy the frogs from you and your houses, *that* they may remain in the river only." So he said, "Tomorrow." And he said, "*Let it be* according to your word, that you may know that *there is* no one like the LORD our God. And the frogs shall depart from you, from your houses, from your servants, and from your people. They shall remain in the river only." Then Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh. And Moses cried out to the LORD concerning the frogs which He had brought against Pharaoh. So the LORD did according to the word of Moses. And the frogs died out of the houses, out of the courtyards, and out of the fields. They gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank. But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and did not heed them, as the LORD had said.

a. **Entreat the LORD that He may take away the frogs:** Here, God's previous promise (Exodus 7:1) was fulfilled. As a prophet of God, Moses stood in the place of God before Pharaoh, and Pharaoh made his request to God through Moses.

i. **Entreat:** "An unusual word, meaning 'intercede', the first occasion on which pharaoh has been really moved, and on which he makes a promise to let Israel go, a promise which he does not keep." (Cole)

ii. "The frogs could not be killed because of their sacredness, and yet such large numbers of them would be revolting in their loathsomeness, especially because cleanliness was a particular mark of the Egyptians." (Thomas)

b. **So the LORD did according to the word of Moses:** When Moses prayed, God answered - and all the frogs died. The understated description "**the land stank**" gives a hint at how nauseating it was.

c. **He hardened his heart:** Even when Pharaoh's plea was granted, his heart did not change - **he hardened his heart** - yet Pharaoh did just as God said he would.

i. "This becomes a familiar pattern: when he did not keep it the first time, no doubt it became easier and easier to do the same again." (Cole)

ii. "Pharaoh *increased his guilt*. His vows heaped up his transgressions. He forgot his promises; but God did not. They were laid by in store against him." (Spurgeon)

iii. "As to Pharaoh, it is the story of a strong will, making itself stupid, while all the way, until the condition was utterly beyond hope of remedy, God gave him opportunity to use that strong will in surrender." (Morgan)

B. The third plague: Lice.

1. (16-17) God tells Moses to initiate the plague of lice.

So the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your rod, and strike the dust of the land, so that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.'" And they did so. For Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod and struck the dust of the earth, and it became lice on man and beast. All the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt.

a. **Stretch out your rod:** This plague came unannounced. This time God did not show Pharaoh the mercy of a warning and an invitation to repentance.

i. We must never think God is unfair when He does not show mercy. If someone were *totally* fair, they would *never* show mercy.

b. **Struck the dust of the earth, and it became lice on man and beast:** This plague struck at the heart of all Egyptian worship, especially at their priests. The Egyptian priesthood was extremely careful about hygiene and ritual cleansing;

an infestation of lice made them unable to worship their gods.

i. The plague of lice was also upon every **beast**. The gods of Egypt would not receive the sacrifice of lice-infested animals, so this stopped their sacrificial system.

2. (18-19) The magicians of Egypt are unable to duplicate this plague.

Now the magicians so worked with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not. So there were lice on man and beast. Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This *is* the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, just as the LORD had said.

a. **Now the magicians so worked with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not:** These magicians could use occult powers to change a rod into a snake, to turn water into blood, and to summon frogs - yet they could not bring forth lice. This shows that as great as Satan's power is, it is limited - and it comes to its limit rather early.

b. **This is the finger of God:** When the magicians said this to Pharaoh, it showed they knew there was a power greater than their own, yet it was a power that they did not honor and serve.

c. **Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them:** The hardness of Pharaoh's heart is shown when he would not even listen to the analysis of his own advisers. There was no *rational* reason why he insisted on resisting and rejecting the LORD God.

C. The fourth plague: Flies.

1. (20-23) Moses warns Pharaoh of a plague of flies.

And the LORD said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh as he comes out to the water. Then say to him, 'Thus says the LORD: "Let My people go, that they may serve Me. Or else, if you will not let My people go, behold, I will send swarms of *flies* on you and your servants, on your people and into your houses. The houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of *flies*, and also the ground on which they *stand*. And in that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, in which My people dwell, that no swarms of *flies* shall be there, in order that you may know that I *am* the LORD in the midst of the land. I will make a difference between My people and your people. Tomorrow this sign shall be.'"

a. **Let My people go, that they may serve Me:** There is no record of a specific reply from Pharaoh to this request, but since the plague came, he obviously did not soften his heart towards the LORD God or Israel. Perhaps the reaction was not described because there was no reaction; perhaps he ignored Moses' message.

b. **In that day I will set apart the land of Goshen:** This is the first mention of the idea that **the land of Goshen** (where most the Israelites lived) was spared in the plagues. Possibly, the people of Israel suffered at least somewhat under the previous plagues. To a large extent, they would be spared in this fourth plague.

c. **In order that you may know that I am the LORD in the midst of the land:** To *ignore* someone demonstrates hatred just as much as *attacking* them does. If Pharaoh thought he could ignore God and His messenger, he was wrong and the plagues would continue.

d. **I will make a difference between My people and your people:** God wanted Pharaoh to know that there was something special about the people of Israel. Pharaoh refused to recognize this, so the plagues continued.

i. "If only we will let the Spirit of God work unhindered, He will effect an inward division. Our tastes and desires, our hopes and aims, will become different, and we shall be aware of a growing dissimilarity between ourselves and the world." (Meyer)

2. (24) The plague of flies comes.

And the LORD did so. Thick swarms of *flies* came into the house of Pharaoh, *into* his servants' houses, and into all the land of Egypt. The land was corrupted because of the swarms of *flies*.

a. **Thick swarms of flies came:** Literally, it says God sent *a swarm* (Hebrew, *awrob*) upon Egypt; it does not specify what the swarm was. It may have been a variety of insects. Psalm 78:45 says these swarms *devoured them*, and this indicates that there were biting insects in the swarm.

i. **Thick swarms of flies:** "The word occurs only here and in passages based on this context, and its exact meaning is conjectural. 'Fleas' or 'sandflies' are other suggestions: but 'mosquitoes' may be the best translation." (Cole)

b. **Into the house of Pharaoh, into his servants' houses, and into all the land of Egypt:** No one was spared this terrible plague - except for the people of Israel, who largely lived in the land of Goshen (Exodus 8:22).

c. **The land was corrupted because of the swarms of flies:** This shows that the point of this plague was probably the same as the plague of lice. The Egyptian gods could not be worshipped amidst this uncleanness.

3. (25-27) Pharaoh tries to compromise with Moses.

Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, "Go, sacrifice to your God in the land." And Moses said, "It is not right to do so, for we would be sacrificing the abomination of the Egyptians to the LORD our God. If we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, then will they not stone us? We will go three days' journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to the LORD our God as He will command us."

a. **Go, sacrifice to your God in the land:** In this, Pharaoh suggested a compromise, allowing Israel a holiday for their God, but demanding they stay within the land of Egypt to worship. Pharaoh wanted to negotiate with Moses (and the LORD), and find some compromise common ground.

i. "That is the true attitude of the man of faith. Evil is always suggesting some compromise. To listen to it, is to remain enslaved. The only way into liberty is to leave the land of evil; to go accompanied by the women and the children; and to take all property also. It is when that attitude is assumed, that men pass out from all bondage, and find the liberty which is in the purpose of God for them." (Morgan)

b. **If we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, then will they not stone us?** Moses reminded Pharaoh of the social uproar this would cause, and held to the original request, refusing to compromise. Moses' character has grown strong before Pharaoh.

i. "Moses refuses on the grounds that to sacrifice in Egypt would be like killing a pig in a Muslim mosque, or slaughtering a cow in a Hindu temple...In the sense that the Egyptians would consider the sacrifice of a sacred animal as blasphemous." (Cole)

4. (28-32) Pharaoh's false repentance.

And Pharaoh said, "I will let you go, that you may sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness; only you shall not go very far away. Intercede for me." Then Moses said, "Indeed I am going out from you, and I will entreat the LORD, that the swarms of flies may depart tomorrow from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people. But let Pharaoh not deal deceitfully anymore in not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD." So Moses went out from Pharaoh and entreated the LORD. And the LORD did according to the word of Moses; He removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people. Not one remained. But Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also; neither would he let the people go.

a. **I will let you go, that you may sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness:** This was a clear promise, and one that Pharaoh did not live up to. We cannot tell if Pharaoh deliberately lied to Moses or simply changed his mind once the plague of flies was gone.

i. Many people turn to God in a time of calamity, and when things get better, they almost immediately turn their hearts back in hardness to God. Pharaoh was not an unusual example of humanity; he was like many or most of us, ancient or modern.

ii. **I will let you go** carries the tone that Pharaoh believed that he owned or controlled Israel. "They were not Pharaoh's

people; Pharaoh never chose them, he had never brought them where they were. He had not fought with them and overcome them. They were not captives in war, nor did they dwell in a territory which was the spoil of fair conflict." (Spurgeon)

b. **Intercede for me:** This shows Pharaoh knew exactly who the plagues came from, and how they could be stopped (by humbly appealing to the LORD God).

c. **Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also:** Despite God's kindness to him and to Egypt, Pharaoh continued to harden **his heart**. This is a demonstration of how deep and severe the gradual hardening of a heart may become.

i. As we continue in sin and reject God's opportunities for us to repent and return, the hardening continues. It is commonly seen. A man doesn't start by gambling away his paycheck; it starts with continuing on in friendly betting, and his heart grows hard. A man doesn't start with shameful perversion; it starts with a few magazines, a couple of videos, and his heart grows hard. A woman doesn't start addicted to alcohol; it starts with some social drinking and her heart grows hard.

ii. "The drunkard, the murderer himself, is a man who at first did evil as far as he dared, and afterwards dared to do evil which he would once have shuddered at." (Chadwick)

Exodus 10 - The Plagues Continue

A. The eighth plague: Locusts.

1. (1-6) God tells Moses to bring another warning to Pharaoh.

Now the LORD said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants, that I may show these signs of Mine before him, and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son's son the mighty things I have done in Egypt, and My signs which I have done among them, that you may know that I *am* the LORD." So Moses and Aaron came in to Pharaoh and said to him, "Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews: 'How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Let My people go, that they may serve Me. Or else, if you refuse to let My people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring locusts into your territory. And they shall cover the face of the earth, so that no one will be able to see the earth; and they shall eat the residue of what is left, which remains to you from the hail, and they shall eat every tree which grows up for you out of the field. They shall fill your houses, the houses of all your servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians; which neither your fathers nor your fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were on the earth to this day.' " And he turned and went out from Pharaoh.

a. **I have hardened his heart:** Here the LORD says that He **hardened** Pharaoh's heart, yet in Exodus 9:34 it says that *he* [Pharaoh] *hardened his heart*. Both were true, and one does not deny the other. In hardening Pharaoh's heart, God allowed him to have what he sinfully desired - a hard heart against the LORD and His people.

b. **That you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son's son the mighty things I have done in Egypt:** God's work was not only for the sake of the generation of Moses and Pharaoh; it was also for **your son and your son's son**. God does mighty works among us so that we can encourage generations to come.

c. **How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me?** Getting to the heart of the matter, God warned Pharaoh to **humble** himself or the worst plague of locusts ever seen would come upon Egypt. *Pride* was at the heart of Pharaoh's problem; he simply didn't want to give into God.

i. It's an important question that God would ask to anyone: **How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me?**

2. (7-11) Pharaoh seems to relent - with qualifications.

Then Pharaoh's servants said to him, "How long shall this man be a snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their God. Do you not yet know that Egypt is destroyed?" So Moses and Aaron were brought again to Pharaoh, and he said to them, "Go, serve the LORD your God. Who *are* the ones that are going?" And Moses said, "We will go with our young and our old; with our sons and our daughters, with our flocks and our herds we will go, for we must hold a

feast to the LORD." Then he said to them, "The LORD had better be with you when I let you and your little ones go! Beware, for evil is ahead of you. Not so! Go now, you *who are* men, and serve the LORD, for that is what you desired." And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.

a. **How long shall this man be a snare to us?** These men, known as **Pharaoh's servants** hardened their hearts before (Exodus 9:34). Yet even *they* relented in light of the destruction that came upon Egypt; but Pharaoh's heart was harder still!

b. **Who are the ones that are going?** Pharaoh again wanted to bargain with God and Moses. He wanted to allow some to go into the wilderness to worship, but to keep the women and children home as hostages.

i. Pharaoh offered a compromise in Exodus 8:25-26, suggesting that they could have a day to sacrifice to the LORD while still in Egypt. Moses rejected that compromise, and would reject this one also. God would not make this bargain, because He didn't need to. This time, and every time, God holds all the negotiating leverage.

ii. What Pharaoh wanted is what many of us want in the flesh: a way to "give in" to God, without fully submitting to Him. Sometimes we look for a way to bargain with God as an equal, instead of submitting to Him as Creator and LORD.

iii. When Moses first came to Pharaoh, Pharaoh said: *Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go?* (Exodus 5:2). The fact that Pharaoh still would not submit to the LORD showed that he didn't know who the LORD was yet. This was despite the fact that the LORD God had made it clear that He was:

- Greater than the god *Khnum* (the guardian of the Nile)
- Greater than the god *Hapi* (the spirit of the Nile)
- Greater than the god *Osiris* (who had the Nile as his bloodstream)
- Greater than the goddess *Heqt* (the frog-goddess of fertility)
- Greater than the goddess *Hathor* (a cow-like mother goddess)
- Greater than the god *Imhotep* (the god of medicine)
- Greater than *Nut* (the sky goddess)
- Able to stop the whole worship of the Egyptian gods with loathsome lice and swarms of insects

iv. Despite all this, Pharaoh showed he still did not know the LORD God. Therefore, God would show him more.

3. (12-15) The plague of locusts comes.

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land; all that the hail has left." So Moses stretched out his rod over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind on the land all that day and all *that* night. When it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts. And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt and rested on all the territory of Egypt. *They were* very severe; previously there had been no such locusts as they, nor shall there be such after them. For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they ate every herb of the land and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left. So there remained nothing green on the trees or on the plants of the field throughout all the land of Egypt.

a. **They ate every herb of the land and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left:** Yahweh showed Himself greater than the Egyptian god *Set*, thought to be the protector of crops.

b. **There remained nothing green on the trees or on the plants of the field:** God did for Pharaoh what He will do in our lives - expose and topple every false god. When we trust in these gods it hurts to see them fall, but it is always best to have them exposed.

4. (16-20) Another false repentance by Pharaoh.

Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste, and said, "I have sinned against the LORD your God and against you. Now therefore, please forgive my sin only this once, and entreat the LORD your God, that He may take away from me this death only." So he went out from Pharaoh and entreated the LORD. And the LORD turned a very strong west wind, which took the locusts away and blew them into the Red Sea. There remained not one locust in all the territory of Egypt.

But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go.

a. **I have sinned against the LORD your God and against you:** Pharaoh did the same thing in Exodus 9:27-28. He said the *words* of repentance but did not follow through with the actions. His heart was only hardened more after God relented and showed mercy.

i. "Once again comes the easy confession of sin, and the shallow repentance that springs only from a desire to avert the consequences." (Cole)

B. The ninth plague: Darkness.

1. (21-23) A plague of darkness comes without warning.

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, darkness *which* may even be felt." So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. They did not see one another; nor did anyone rise from his place for three days. But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

a. **Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt:** As was the pattern with the previous plagues, the third in this set of three came without warning.

b. **Darkness which may even be felt:** This was no normal darkness, it had a supernatural element to it that could **be felt**. Light is not only a physical property; it is an aspect of God's character (*God is light and in Him is no darkness at all*, 1 John 1:5). In judgment, God can withdraw His presence so significantly that the void remaining is **darkness which may even be felt**.

i. Seemingly, God did not even allow artificial light sources to work. The Egyptians attempted to use candles and lamps but were unable to produce light. This was dramatic show of greatness over the prominent Egyptian god *Ra*, thought to be the sun god.

c. **All the children of Israel had light in their dwellings:** We don't know if this was because God spared them the plague or because God granted them His unique presence, bringing a supernatural light.

2. (24-29) Pharaoh's last attempt at a compromise with Moses.

Then Pharaoh called to Moses and said, "Go, serve the LORD; only let your flocks and your herds be kept back. Let your little ones also go with you." But Moses said, "You must also give us sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God. Our livestock also shall go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind. For we must take some of them to serve the LORD our God, and even we do not know with what we must serve the LORD until we arrive there." But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go. Then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me! Take heed to yourself and see my face no more! For in the day you see my face you shall die!" And Moses said, "You have spoken well. I will never see your face again."

a. **Go, serve the LORD; only let your flocks and your herds be kept back:** With this, Pharaoh made his last offer to Moses. All the children of Israel could go into the wilderness for three days of sacrifice unto the LORD God, but they must leave their livestock behind.

i. Undoubtedly, Pharaoh felt God was a hard bargainer and made the best deal for Himself that He could. Pharaoh still saw things as someone who thought he could bargain with the Creator. This shows that he still didn't really know who the LORD God was, because He still had not submitted to Him.

b. **Not a hoof shall be left behind:** The LORD God, and the prophet Moses representing Him, was absolutely unwilling to compromise on these points. God wanted deliverance for *all of Israel* and for *all that belonged to Israel*, and was not willing to deal on the point.

i. This reflects the response of God to every attempt we make to surrender less than everything to Him, or to willingly leave some things in bondage. He says, "**Not a hoof shall be left behind.**"

c. **Get away from me! Take heed to yourself and see my face no more!** In exasperation, Pharaoh ordered Moses out and told him to never come back. Moses assured Pharaoh, "**You have spoken well. I will never see your face again**" - but this was not good news for Pharaoh.

i. "Pharaoh was now beyond reason, and God did not reason with him." (Morgan)

ii. This ends the account of the nine plagues, and though there is one yet to come - the plague upon the firstborn - it is so unique that it must be considered by itself.

iii. The Bible tells us there were several reasons why God sent these plagues upon Pharaoh and Egypt.

- To answer Pharaoh's question, *Who is the LORD?* (Exodus 5:2). In the plagues, God showed Himself greater than any of the false gods of Egypt
- To show the power of God through Moses (Exodus 9:16)
- To give a testimony to the children of Israel for future generations (Exodus 10:2)
- To judge the false gods - demons, really - of Egypt (Exodus 12:12, Numbers 33:4)
- To warn the nations - more than 400 years later, the Philistines remembered the LORD God of Israel as the one who plagued the Egyptians (1 Samuel 4:8)
- As a testimony of the greatness of God to Israel (Exodus 15:11, Deuteronomy 4:34)