

Sunday morning
teaching plan

Date: 18th May
2025

TITLE:	Plagues of Egypt
THEME:	Who is the greatest? God or Pharaoh (us)—Battle Royale
AIM:	YPs to understand that God is sovereign and Pharaoh's choices killed him.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

This is a very famous story, but one with a dark spiritual battle raging that often gets overlooked. This battle of wills between Moses and Pharaoh is really all about God demonstrating His authority and power over the impotent gods of Egypt. All Pharaohs were believed to be a god. They had supreme power. But here we see how Yahweh gradually unpicks his power and leaves him helpless. Is this unfair? Is God being rather cruel? No, Egypt was built on injustice, slavery and selfishness. All who benefitted from it were guilty of being a part of it. God gives numerous chances to Pharaoh to accept God's authority and clean up his act. He repeatedly refuses. There is a lesson here for us too. Rejection of God will lead to destruction, it is our choice.

WARM UP

Who /What is the greatest? Selection of statements... choose instantly which is better.

Ask one person each time why they made the choice they did. Did any one change their mind after hearing a reason?

MAIN TEACHING

Activity 1: Set the scene: Ask what they know of the story of the Hebrews in Egypt, Moses, the plagues etc.

Key teaching points: Hebrews have been slaves for 400 years. God calls Moses to be the one to lead them from slavery using God's power. Pharaoh repeatedly refuses to acknowledge God.

Watch short clip about the plagues: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vyEuYIGRBO4>

Ask: Why did God send the plagues on Egypt?

Use PowerPoint slides to show how each plague God was showing His power over the Egyptian gods. (Don't need to take too long here— skip through it)

Key teaching point: God is sovereign. He is in control, despite the best efforts of Pharaoh and his magicians to be in control.

Sometimes in life we will face challenging situations. It is easy to lose sight of God's sovereignty and power and try to work things out for ourselves.. Exodus 9:16 reminds us of the truth! God is in control

"I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth."

When things are difficult for us we **MUST NOT** be like Pharaoh, heart hardened and stubborn. Trusting in God's sovereignty means recognizing He controls everything, even when we don't understand what is happening! His ways are higher than ours, He knows better.

Activity 2 God uses the plagues as a warning about our choices

Read Exodus 8:1 and 12:28-32

1. What message does Moses give to Pharaoh in 8:1?
2. What happened as a result of Pharaoh's refusal? (Plagues) Why did he keep refusing? (hard heart)
3. Are the plagues fair? How does God judge and show mercy during this time?

Key teaching point: God wants to set us free in order for us to have a relationship with Him. We have to leave our old life behind, our life of slavery to sin. When we refuse to acknowledge God's sovereignty and make our own choices, they will ultimately lead to separation from God, death! Pharaoh believed he was better than God, knew better, had control. These choices led to his downfall. The plagues are just, because Egyptian society was built on slavery and exploitation, things God hates. The destruction of their society is a picture of life without God, ultimately doomed to destruction. God shows mercy and justice by separating the Hebrews out and not allowing the plagues to affect them.

Activity 3. Hardness of heart

Read Exodus 9:34-35

1. Why was Pharaoh's heart hard?
2. What in our life can cause hardness of heart towards God?
3. Is it possible to soften your heart?

Key teaching point. It says God hardened Pharaoh's heart. This means that God knew the stubbornness of Pharaoh and was able to "push his buttons" getting him to react in the way his character would always respond. In our lives, we can be resistant to God when we see a conflict of interest, God calls us to one thing, we want to do another. We can be stubborn. The more we resist God the harder our hearts become. Yes it is always possible to change. We must become open to God and humble before Him. We must realise we are not perfect and He is sovereign over us!

TAKEAWAY

Use PowerPoint slide at end as a reflection and prayer time. Give YPs chance to reflect on whether their heart is hard or soft to God. Quote Ezekiel 36:26-27

And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

Leader: prayer about having soft hearts

EXTRA INFORMATION