Exodus 7-12:30

“Today if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts” (Hebrews 3:7).

In this lesson students will learn about the terrible plagues that descended on the land of Egypt. Egypt was a large country, but most of the population lived along the banks of the Nile river. This 3,000-mile waterway was a “river of life” for the Egyptians. It made life possible in a land that was mostly desert by providing water for drinking, farming, bathing, and fishing. Without the Nile’s water, Egyptian civilization could not have existed. Imagine Pharaoh’s dismay when Moses turned this sacred river to blood! This was only the beginning of many plagues to follow!
In the story of the plagues of Egypt, we are often incredulous that it took ten plagues for Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave. He just couldn’t believe it was God’s voice that was speaking rather than Moses.’ Interesting enough, but what does it mean to us today? I believe it boils down to how good our hearing is. Do they recognize God’s voice when they hear it? How do we recognize God’s voice anyway? The same way we learn to recognize any friend’s voice. We spend time with them and learn what they sound like. Generally, your closest friends don’t have to identify themselves when they call you on the phone. Even though you can’t see them, you know their voice. So, it is with our friendship with God. The more time we spend with Him in prayer and reading His Word, the more we recognize when He speaks to us, even if it’s not audible.

In John 10:1-5, Jesus gives the illustration of a shepherd and His sheep. “The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. But, they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him, because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.” Jesus goes on to say He’s the shepherd and we’re His sheep. The sheep’s ears are trained to hear and recognize their shepherd’s voice, because of the time they’ve spent together. That familiar voice represents safety and care. They will follow that shepherd anywhere. We must do no less to learn our Shepherd’s voice. Commit to spending time just listening to God during your prayer time. “Today if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts” (Hebrews 3:7).
**Get Set!**

**Option A**

**IT’S MAGIC!**

**Materials:** Several identical pictures or cards

**Procedure:** Spread the cards face down in front of the kids and ask one of them to pick a card, but don’t show it to you. Mix the chosen card in with the others and tell them you will pick the same card out again. Pull out a card and show it to the child. *Is this the same card that you chose?* Of course, it will be because all the cards are the same. *Wow! That was magic, wasn’t it? How did I know which card he had chosen?* Let the children guess, then let them in on the trick. *What is a magician? A magician is someone who can do magic tricks. When I picked out the same card that ____ did, it was just a trick, wasn’t it? I can’t really tell one card from another by just looking at the back of them. Magicians can do many more amazing tricks than I can and they make it look real. They can make it look like things disappear, but we know it’s only a trick. But when God does a miracle, it isn’t magic. It’s real. Let’s hear in our Bible story about how God did things better than magicians.*

**Story Tie-In:** Magicians can trick you with magic, but God does the real thing

**GO TO THE BIBLE STORY**

**Option B**

**ROCK VS. SPONGE**

**Materials:** A rock, a sponge, a bowl of water

**Procedure:** I have two things with me today. A rock and a sponge. What’s the difference between them? (A rock is hard, a sponge soft. A rock doesn’t soak up water, a sponge does.) Let’s see what happens when we put them both in water. Put them in the water. *The rock is still hard, but the sponge is softer than ever. It soaked up water, but the rock didn’t. That reminds me of a story in our Bible about a king called Pharaoh whose heart was as hard as this rock. Let’s listen.*

**Story Tie-In:** Pharaoh’s heart was as hard as a rock. It couldn’t soak up God’s love like this soft sponge soaks up water

**GO TO THE BIBLE STORY**
Teacher Tip: Provide markers for students to highlight portions of the story in their Bibles.

Have children join you in saying “NO!” every time Pharaoh said it. Long ago, mean king Pharaoh made Moses’ people, the Israelites, work very hard. He didn’t even let them stop to rest or give them a drink of water! This made Moses very sad. One day, God told Moses He had chosen him to help get the Israelites out of Egypt where they had to work so hard. Moses went to ask Pharaoh to let his people go, but he said, “NO!” Moses warned him that God would do terrible things to him and the land of Egypt if he wouldn’t do as God said, but Pharaoh still said, “NO!” So, God sent a plague every time Pharaoh said, “NO!” That happened ten times!

What is a plague? A plague is something very bad. God sent ten plagues, because Pharaoh told Moses “NO!” ten times. He first made all the water turn into blood, so the Egyptians had nothing to drink. Then, he sent millions of frogs, gnats, and flies. They were everywhere, even in their beds! Wherever people went, the air looked black because of the flies and gnats. They could hardly walk without stepping on frogs. But still Pharaoh said, “NO!” Pharaoh’s magicians could do some of the same things, like turning water into blood, so he didn’t believe that God wanted him to let the Israelites go. Next, God sent a plague that killed all the livestock. Livestock are farm animals like horses, donkeys, cows, sheep and goats. All of Egypt’s livestock died, but the Israelites’ animals didn’t. But, Pharaoh still said, “NO!”

Then came the plague of boils, which are terrible sores that covered the Egyptians’ bodies. What do you think Pharaoh said? “NO!” God sent a plague of hail. What’s hail? It’s balls of ice that fall like rain. The hail ruined all the Egyptians’ plants, so they had nothing left in their gardens and fields. Still, Pharaoh said, “NO!” Next, there was a plague of locusts. Locusts are big bugs that eat trees and plants. They buzz very loudly. Let me hear you buzz. Buzzzzzzz. That must be what it sounded like with all those locusts. There were so many the ground was black! But, Pharaoh said, “NO!” Then God sent a plague of darkness. For three days it was so dark you couldn’t see your hand in front of your face, even in the daytime! But, what did Pharaoh say? “NO!” The last plague was the very worst. God said He would kill the oldest child in each of the Egyptians’ homes if Pharaoh wouldn’t listen to Him and let the Israelites go. That night the Pharaoh’s son died, and he was very sad. Finally he said, “YES!” So, Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt and God went with them.
Go!

Prince of Egypt

VIDEO

Materials: “Prince of Egypt” video

Quest Connection

Moses was the Prince of Egypt and did what God asked him to do, even when it was hard.

Procedure: Preview this video prior to class and show only the parts you want to emphasize in your lesson. Or, take two or three weeks to watch the entire movie.

God will help us do whatever He asks and will always take care of us.
Go!

Frogs, Frogs Everywhere

PHYSICAL

Materials: Several four-inch circles cut out of green construction paper

Quest Connection

God sent a plague of frogs.

Procedure: Scatter the green circles all over the floor. Let’s pretend that each green circle is a frog. When God sent the plague of frogs, they were everywhere! People had to be careful where they walked so they didn’t step on them. Let’s see if we can walk across the room without stepping on any “frogs."

Close

You did great! It was fun playing that game, but it wasn’t fun when God really sent the plagues on Egypt. It was horrible! Do you remember why He did that? Because Pharaoh had a hard heart that wouldn’t obey Him. Let’s ask God to help us have soft hearts.

Prayer: God, we love You and want to listen and obey You. Help us to have soft hearts to do that. Amen.
Talking Frog

PUPPET

Materials: Green paper plates (or white ones colored green), two plastic spoons per child, four green legs (see Teacher Resource), tiny black circles for pupils of eyes (about the size of a paper punch hole), long, red tongue (see Teacher Resource), bug stickers

God sent a plague of frogs, but Pharaoh said, “NO!” Let’s make a talking frog to remind us of the plague of frogs.

Procedure: If using white paper plates, have children color them green. Fold paper plate in half and cut 2 slits in the top for eyes. Stick the plastic spoons upside down through the slits and break off the handle that extends past the opening. You now have two bulging eyes! Tape down the handles inside the frog’s mouth to secure spoons. Glue or draw a tiny black circle on each spoon for the pupils of the frog’s eyes. Glue on four legs, the short ones for the front legs and the long ones for the back. Glue a red tongue in the fold. Put a bug sticker on the end of the tongue. Roll the tongue around a pencil. When tongue is unrolled again it will look like he caught a bug! Children will be able to make their frog “talk” by holding it at the fold of the plate and opening and closing it like a puppet.

What do you think this frog would say to Pharaoh if it really could talk?
Frog Magnets

ARTS AND CRAFTS

Materials: Green, yellow, black, and red craft foam; glue, marker, magnet

Quest Connection

God sent a plague of frogs, but Pharaoh said, “NO!”

Procedure: Cut a three-inch circle for the frog’s head and two one-inch circles from the green foam for his eyes. Cut two yellow circles slightly smaller than the one-inch green circles, and two black circles slightly smaller than the yellow ones. These will be part of the eyes. Cut a two-inch oval from the red foam for a tongue. Glue the lower half of the green eyes to the top of the frog’s head so they extend above the top of the head. Glue the yellow circles to the center of the eyes. Glue the black circles on the yellow circles. Draw a smile on your frog’s face, then cut a slit in it for the tongue to fit through. Glue the tongue to the back of the frog. Draw a line down the center of the tongue almost to the end. Glue a magnet to the back of the frog’s head.

Close

This happy frog will stick to your refrigerator and many other metal objects. He can remind us how happy we feel when we obey God.
Mini Fly Swatters

CRAFT

Materials: Poster board, craft sticks, glue, Resource Page

Quest Connection

I bet King Pharaoh and the Egyptians wished they had fly swatters when the plagues of flies and gnats came. We can make a fly swatter to remind us to obey God and whatever He asks us to do.

Procedure: Cut the fly swatter shape from the poster board using the pattern from Teacher Resource. Glue the fly swatter to the craft stick and let it dry. Write the Key Quest Verse on the fly swatter and let the kids decorate it however they wish.

Close

God took care of the Israelites. He loved them very much and wanted them to have a happy life. God loves us and cares for us, too.
It’s Hailing!

OBJECT LESSON

Materials: A box containing ping pong balls, artificial plants, or dry branches and flowers stuck in some dirt, like a garden

Quest Connection

One of the plagues was a big hail storm. Who remembers what hail is? The hail ruined all the plants the Egyptians were growing.

Procedure: Show the children the artificial plants set up like a garden. This might have been like the Egyptians’ gardens before God sent the hail storm, because King Pharaoh wouldn’t obey Him. When the hail came, all their plants and gardens were ruined! Let’s play a game. I have a box of ping pong balls that we will pretend is hail. Let’s throw these ping pong balls at the plants and see what happens. We’ll make a hail storm with the balls like God did with real hail. After all the balls have been thrown, survey the damage to the garden. “Our garden got ruined just like the Egyptians’ gardens did,” or “these ping pong balls didn’t hurt our garden like the hail ruined the gardens in Egypt.”

Close

When God sent the plague of hail, it ruined all the things growing in Egypt. It’s important to obey God!
Go!

Soft and Hard

GAME

Materials: Soft and hard items in a bag or box

Quest Connection

God wants us to have soft hearts that listen and obey His voice.

Procedure: Let’s play a game. I have things in my bag that are either hard or soft. I want you to close your eyes and feel one thing in my bag and tell whether it’s hard or soft, then guess what it is. Who wants to go first?

Close

It’s easy to tell which things in the bag were hard and soft. How can we tell when our hearts are soft or hard? If we want to do things that make God happy, then our hearts are soft. If we want to do things that make God unhappy, then our hearts are hard. Let’s have soft hearts for God!
Go!

Discovery Area

DISCOVERY

Materials: Rocks, sponges, tub of water

Quest Connection

Pharaoh’s heart was hard. He wouldn’t listen to what God said.

Procedure: Provide a play area where children can experiment with the rocks and sponges in the water.

Close

We need to have soft hearts like the sponges so we can do what God says and enjoy His love.
Resource Page—
Talking Frog

TEACHER RESOURCES

FROG LEGS

FROG TONGUE
Resource Page—Mini Fly Swatter

Cut out mini fly swatter and attach to craft stick.
Circle the pictures of the plagues God sent on Egypt. Put an X on the pictures that weren’t part of the plagues.

“Today if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.”
Hebrews 3:7
Worksheet

How many plagues did God send on Egypt?

10

ten

How many cows?

10

ten

“Today if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.”
Hebrews 3:7
Worksheet—Matching Cards

Cut out the pictures and glue them to construction paper squares or poster board squares. The students may pair up with each other to play a matching game. The child with the most matches wins.
Pharaoh did not obey God, because he didn’t love Him. I love God. I can be a good listener and do what He wants me to do. Here’s a picture of me obeying God . . .

“Today if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts” (Hebrews 3:7).