

# *“Working Together”*

**Study:** Exodus 4:18-31

**Reading:** Hebrews 10:19-39

**Memory:** Proverbs 3:17

## Exodus



### What Does the Bible Say?

We are not told when or how Moses finally submitted to God, but we know that he did because he went back to his father-in-law and asked if he could go back to Egypt to see how the Israelites were doing. Jethro agreed to let him go. God had instructed Moses to go back, and He let him know that he didn't have to fear for his life since those who had been seeking to kill him for his murderous acts were now dead. Moses didn't travel back to Egypt alone, but took his children and wife with him. He also made sure that he took his staff with him since it was an important tool for Him to be able to use, and it was a reminder to him of God's calling on his life (vs 18-20).

God had equipped Moses to do His will by giving him the miraculous signs to show the people and to show to Pharaoh. Yet, at the same time, He prepared Moses for rejection, telling him that Pharaoh would not listen and that the requests that Moses would give would harden the heart of Pharaoh. The idea that God would harden the heart of Pharaoh brings up a few questions. We do see this phrase used in other Bible passages. It seems best to understand the hardening of the heart with the view that the acts of God would cause the stubbornness of Pharaoh to increase, strengthening his resolve in his own power, causing him not to give in to God. Eventually God would have to kill the firstborn son of Pharaoh before Pharaoh would have his hard heart broken and allow the Israelites to leave the land (vs 21-23).

Verse 24-26 present us with an interesting story that seems to leave more questions than answers. As Moses traveled with his family to Egypt, they stopped somewhere for the night and we are told that the Lord was seeking to kill Moses. The reason God was going to do this was because Moses had not circumcised his sons. We are not told, but it seems to be that Moses knew he should have circumcised his children, but for some reason, perhaps because of Zipporah, he chose not to circumcise his children. God's response to this gives the idea that Moses was directly

rebelling against what God had told him. It was the job of Moses to have his sons circumcised, but Zipporah took the lead and performed the circumcision. She then threw the foreskin at the feet of Moses, declaring that he was a “bridegroom of blood” to her. We are not sure if Zipporah didn’t want to circumcise her children but finally did because God was going to kill her husband or if this was something that Moses chose not to do. It appears that the reason this story was included was to emphasize the importance of circumcision for the children of Israel (vs 24-26).

God must have directed Moses to go back to Sinai because He also told Aaron to go to Sinai to meet with Moses. We are not sure if they had any communication over the 40 years that Moses had been away, but it must have been wonderful for them to be reunited. The emotions must have also been heightened when Moses started telling Aaron about the miracles that God did for him and all that God had commanded for them to do (vs 27-28).

Aaron was a key part of God’s plan since he had been living with the Israelites and was probably a leader among the Israelites. He was able to gather together the leaders and he told them everything that God had revealed to Moses. Moses then performed the signs that God had given him which caused the people to believe. News of God’s deliverance quickly spread among the Israelites and they were thrilled because God had seen their affliction and heard their cries for help. They worshiped God and looked forward to the day they would be delivered from their oppression, though they did not fully realize what was ahead (vs 29-31).

## **How Does this Apply to Me?**

Do you sometimes feel alone in your call to serve God? Moses found great relief in having Aaron along side of him. It must have been great for them to have each other to lean on and encourage each other. Too often in society today we try to do things on our own. One thing you will often find in Scripture is that great things were accomplished for God with the help of relationships. Leaders often had close friends who came along side of them to help them. Though the friends don’t often get the credit for the great things that were accomplished, they were vital to the leaders who did great things. One of the great places relationships are formed today is in the church. Intimate fellowship and encouragement should be a regular part of your church life. Real church is not a building or a meeting time, but the gathering of believers to encourage one another.

What experience did Moses have in the previous verses (vs 18)?

What did Moses decide to do (vs 18)?

Why do you think he asked his father-in-law for permission to leave (vs 18)?

How did God help reassure Moses (vs 19)?

What do you see about the gentleness of God through this assurance?

What did Moses carry with him back to Egypt (vs 20)? Why do you think he carried this with him?

What did God tell Moses to do (vs 21)?

What do you think it means that God hardened Pharaoh’s heart (vs 21)?

What did God say was going to eventually happen (vs 22-23)?

What did God do while Moses was traveling to Egypt (vs 24)?

Why do you think we are told that God was about to kill Moses (vs 24)?

What did the wife of Moses do (vs 25)?

Why do you think she responded the way she did (vs 25-26)?

What point do you think God was making through this?

What did God tell Aaron to do (vs 27-28)?

Why do you think God sent Aaron to Moses?

How was Aaron helpful to Moses (vs 29-30)?

How did the people of Israel respond (vs 31)?

Why did they worship God (vs 31)?

# “Not as Expected”

**Study:** Exodus 5:1-22

**Reading:** Psalm 10:1-18

**Memory:** Proverbs 3:17

**W**hen God called our family to step out on faith and leave Wisconsin for our new ministry in Michigan, it was exciting on one hand and very scary on the other hand. The excitement soon wore off as our financial situation deteriorated day by day. We soon reached the point where we began wondering if we had done something wrong or foolishly stepped out of God’s will. Instead of things getting better, day by day they seemed to be getting harder. Little did I know at the time that God was using the difficulties to direct our paths and show Himself mighty and strong, yet looking back on it now, I can see God’s mighty hand. It may not have been the way I thought it should be done, but God did it much better than I could ever have done it.

Today, we are going to see that things did not go well for Moses or the children of Israel. Though they wanted things to go one way, things went the opposite way of what they expected. This was discouraging to Moses and took an emotional toll on the people of Israel and on Moses.

## What Does the Bible Say?

The elders of Israel liked the plan of Moses and Aaron and were excited about their chance to leave the land of Egypt. News of this must have spread fast among the Israelites and they began to anticipate their departure. It was not going to be as easy as they thought because when Moses went to Pharaoh and asked him to let the Israelites go into the wilderness so they could worship God, Pharaoh wanted nothing to do with their request. The Egyptians believed in many gods and the Pharaoh didn’t have much respect for the God of Israel. He did not fear the one true God so he denied the request of Moses. Moses again asked the Pharaoh to let them go for just three days so their God would not fall on them and hurt them. The request did not settle well with Pharaoh because he loved the slave labor that he had forced Israel to do. Pharaoh then ordered them to make the Israelites work harder. He instructed the taskmasters to make them get their own straw for making the bricks rather

than have the straw brought to them. They would now have to work harder to make the same amount of bricks. This was all a direct punishment for the request that Moses and the elders gave for the children of Israel to leave for three days (vs 1-9).

Instead of making the lives of the Israelites easier, the presence of Moses made their lives more difficult. Now, their masters were commanding hard work from the people and would beat the Israelites for not getting their work done. Their life had turned from miserable to awful (vs 10-14).

The Israelite work leaders complained to Pharaoh because it was becoming impossible for them to get their work done with the new demands. Pharaoh didn’t budge on his demands and called the people of Israel lazy because they wanted to take three days off to worship God. The foremen were greatly discouraged when they left the presence of Pharaoh and were not happy with Moses and Aaron who were waiting for them outside. They blamed Moses and Aaron for their new difficulties and thought that they were going to all die soon because of the hard labor that they were being forced to do (vs 10-21).

Moses didn’t understand this part of God’s plan. God had told him that Pharaoh would reject him, but Moses wasn’t prepared for the rejection by the Israelite people. He wanted to know why God had sent him there only to make things worse (vs 22).

## How Does this Apply to Me?

Can you relate to Moses? Have you ever stepped out in faith and excitement in obedience to God, expecting God to do great things, only to have your situation take a turn for the worse? It is fun when you step out in obedience to God and things go well right away, but when things seem to get worse, it is very easy to question God. The hard thing for Moses was that the labor didn’t get harder for him, but it did for all the people whom he had come to lead. When you live a life of obedience to God, there may be times when God will ask you to step out in faith for Him, and when you do, things will get worse. Yet, what Moses and the Israelite leaders didn’t realize is that God was using this short term pain to bring long term glory for Himself and His people. Though things might get worse, you have to remember during those times that God is in control and that He is working though you may not see this work. If you are going through a difficult time, you don’t have to worry or fear because God has always been and will always be in control.

Where did Moses go after he earned the support of the Israelites (vs 1)?

What authority did Moses tell the Pharaoh he had for his request (vs 1)?

What was the request (vs 1)?

What did Pharaoh question (vs 2)?

What did Moses say would happen if Pharaoh did not let them go (vs 3)?

Why do you think he approached the Pharaoh in this way?

What was the main concern of Pharaoh (vs 4-5)?

How did Pharaoh respond to this request (vs 6-7)?

What did Pharaoh say about the Israelites (vs 8)? Why?

What did Pharaoh want to teach the Israelites (vs 9)?

What change was made to the work of the Israelites (vs 10-11)?

Why did this make things much more difficult (vs 12)?

What demand did the slave drivers have (vs 13-14)?

What plea did the Israelite foremen make (vs 15-16)?

How did Pharaoh respond (vs 17-18)?

How did the foreman view Moses and Aaron after this (vs 19-21)?

How do you think this made Moses feel?

What did Moses question God about (vs 22)?

Why do you think Moses felt this way?

What can you learn about God and circumstances from this?

## ***“Something Big Is Coming”***

**Study:** Exodus 6:1-9

**Reading:** Psalm 42:1-11

**Memory:** Proverbs 3:17

**T**he year that my wife turned 40 she decided that she wanted to do something that would make her feel better so she made the choice to train for a half marathon (13.1 mile run). I told her that I would help her, and a week or two after we started training, she wondered what she got herself into. I remember one day in particular, after we had run about a mile and a half, she felt like she was ready to give up because running seemed harder and harder. I encouraged her to keep at it and not to let the current misery distract her from her goal. The emotions and circumstances that she faced all pointed to giving up, but as I helped her through it, she chose not to quit. She continued her training and went on to do a great job and finished the event that she trained so hard for.

Today, we are going to see how the Israelites couldn't see beyond the misery and despair of their current situation. They didn't see how God was at work and didn't believe Moses when He told them. Yet, the whole time, God was preparing to show Himself more powerful than the people could have ever imagined.

### **What Does the Bible Say?**

Moses had cried out to God because things had become much worse after his request to let the Israelites leave. God answered by telling Moses to wait on Him and watch Him work. God had something in store for the Egyptians that would force them to let the Israelites leave, and the more stubborn Pharaoh was, the greater the miracles of God would be. God had shown Himself to be real and powerful to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but they did not see the full extent of His greatness and power. He had mainly appeared to the forefathers as the God who provided and the God who sustained, but now He was going to make Himself known as the One who kept His promises. He would personally redeem His people and lead them to the Promise Land. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob knew of the name Yahweh (the Lord), but God was going to now reveal Himself as “The Lord” by His actions (vs 1-4).

God had not forgotten the covenant He had made with the nation of Israel and had heard their groaning because of their affliction. He saw the burden that they were under because of their slavery and desired to deliver them from the heavy load they faced. He wasn't going to do this in some sneaky way, but was going to deliver them with great power so that the Israelites, Egyptians and all the nations around them would see and know His great and mighty power. The land that He has promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob soon would be theirs. God fully intended to break the heart of the stubborn Pharaoh and the short term suffering of the Israelites would soon be forgotten. God declared that He was the Lord and He was going to do this (vs 5-9).

This talk with God must have greatly encouraged Moses, but most likely, this encouragement was short lived after he related the message to the Israelites. They didn't believe him and wouldn't listen to him. All they knew was that since Moses came on the scene their hopes had been dashed and their work load was now almost unbearable. He hadn't made things better but made them much worse. They were not going to listen to Moses again because they were afraid that things would continue to go downhill (vs 9).

## **How Does this Apply to Me?**

Do you get discouraged at times when others around you don't share your excitement about God? This happens in the unsaved world around you and also happens when it comes to other believers also. When God is at work, things don't always appear as they really are. God was getting ready to put on one of the greatest displays of His power that the world had ever seen or ever will see. Yet, the people could not believe what was about to take place. Moses tried to convince them of this, but all they could see was the situation that was in front of them. As a follower of God, you must remember that part of faith is believing what you can't see. Another part of being a servant of God involves patience with those you are ministering to. Others may not have the faith of confidence that you have and may tend to focus more on their circumstances than on the power of God. It is easy to let their response and reactions discourage you, but you will do well not to let their doubt control your thinking. Be patient and understanding with those who do allow their circumstances to control their lives and cloud their faith in God, but at the same time, don't let this doubt become part of your life. Choose to trust Him and His Word.

How did God reassure Moses (vs 1)?

What does this reveal about the power of God?

Who did God say He was (vs 2)?

Why would this have been a significant statement to Moses?

How had God appeared to the forefathers (vs 3)?

What did God say He did not do (vs 3)?

What do you think He meant by this?

*\*\*\*God has made promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but did not see most of them fulfilled. The children of Israel would see God at work in a way that their forefathers had never seen.*

What covenant did God intend to keep (vs 4)?

What had God heard (vs 5)?

What does this reveal about the character of God?

What was Moses to declare to the people (vs 6)?

How was God planning to redeem His people (vs 6)?

What does verse 7 reveal about God's plan?

How would the power of God show that He was on their side?

What did God say He was going to do for the Israelites (vs 8)?

Why do you think He declared "I am the Lord" (vs 8)?

What did Moses do with this message (vs 9)?

How did the people respond (vs 9)? Why?

# “Ordinary People”

**Study:** Exodus 6:10-30

**Reading:** I Corinthians 1:18-31

**Memory:** Proverbs 3:17

Yesterday, I had mentioned how my wife ran a half marathon and finished well. Though she was tired after the day she ran it, she was thrilled that she was able to do it and to do so well in it. As she looked back on her training, she thought about one phrase that I continued to remind her of. When she first started running and we ran for two miles, she wondered how she could ever run 13 miles, 9 miles longer than she had ever run in her life. My response to her many times during that training process was “step by step.” I told her, she simply had to put one foot in front of the other day after day during her training and then do the same thing in her race. That is exactly what she did and she was able to accomplish something that seemed impossible to her a few months before.

Today, we are going to see how God uses ordinary people to accomplish His tasks. These things are not accomplished through human power, but as we follow God, step by step, we are able to be “great” servants for Him.

## What Does the Bible Say?

God had encouraged Moses to continue to press on, promising that He would deliver the Israelites out of Egypt. The Israelites were not near as encouraged as Moses. In fact, their hearts had been deflated because the request of Moses had caused Pharaoh to make their lives harder. They wanted Moses to leave them alone and not make things worse. God was not going to give up though because He had a plan and was going to accomplish His purpose. He told Moses to once again visit Pharaoh and this time he was to ask the Pharaoh to let the people leave the land entirely. Moses doubted the request of God because it seemed pointless to him. He had already asked Pharaoh about going away for a few days and Pharaoh chose not to listen to him. He told God that He wasn't a good enough speaker to argue with Pharaoh and convince him to let the people go. Perhaps Moses had stuttered in the first meeting or felt he did a poor job before Pharaoh. God encouraged Moses and Aaron to continue in the

call He had given them. It was not their job to convince the Pharaoh to let the people go, but it was their job to obey what God had told them to do and to confront Pharaoh once again (vs 10-13).

It is unclear why Moses (the assumed author of Exodus) stopped in the middle of the narrative to list the genealogy of Aaron and the other leaders of Israel. Yet, it seems that one of the reasons was for Moses and Aaron to identify where they fit in the tribes of Israel. It needs to be remembered that they emphasized their heritage much more than we do today (vs 14-25).

Verses 26-30 seem to indicate that Moses and Aaron really had no pedigree or importance in the tribes of Israel, yet they were the ones who God chose to help lead the people out of the land. They didn't have the personal clout or ability to be leaders, but God took and used them in a great and mighty way to deliver the Israelites from the Egyptians. Though I may be looking into this a little too much, I would lean towards the purpose of the end of chapter six being the declaration of God's working through simple, everyday people (vs 26-30).

## How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you find yourself thinking it is the pastor's job or the church leader's job to reach out and minister to others? Do you sometimes wish you had more abilities and talents so you could accomplish some of the tasks that you would like to see done for the kingdom of God? It is easy to think in your mind that “great” men and women of God were more special than you are, but a careful study of Scripture reveals that they were just like you and me. Church leaders are no greater than those who sit in the pew and follow. You, whether you are a leader or a follower, have the ability to accomplish great things for the cause of Christ. This greatness is not found in you, but in submissiveness to God. These “great things” may not seem so great at times because they could just be little daily tasks that seem mundane. The things that God wants you to do can also be very hard for you to accomplish. You need His power and strength. Moses felt he had failed when he tried to convince Pharaoh to let the people go, but God knew that He wasn't a failure. God wanted Him to continue and not give up, even though it didn't make sense and may have seemed impossible. God simply wanted Moses to be obedient. That is all God wants from you. He wants your daily obedience. As you seek Him through His Word and prayer, He will show you what He desires. As He shows you these things, He wants you to step by step follow Him.

What did God tell Moses to do (vs 10-11)?

How did Moses respond (vs 12)?

Why do you think Moses felt inadequate?

How have you felt like Moses in your Christian walk?

How did God encourage Moses and Aaron (vs 13)?

What can you see about the patience of God through this?

What do you think was the purpose of verses 14-25?

Who were the father and mother of Moses (vs 20)?

What tribe were they descended from (vs 19)?

Why do you think verses 26-27 point out that the Moses and Aaron mentioned in the previous verses were the ones God called to lead the Israelites out of Egypt?

What did Moses make clear about His message (vs 28-29)?

Why is it so important to emphasize what the Lord says rather than what men say?

What happens when men start to take credit for their actions?

What happens when men start to emphasize what they think rather than to declare what God says?

What did Moses make clear that his response to God was (vs 30)?

## *“Focus On the Task”*

**Study:** Exodus 7:1-13

**Reading:** Isaiah 6:1-13

**Memory:** Proverbs 3:17

**W**hen my son was in early elementary, one word that we constantly used around our house was “FOCUS.” His older sister never had the issues he did with paying attention since she was very task oriented and would work to finish a task. He, on the other hand, would forget what he was doing a second or two after he was told. His mind was constantly being distracted and led away by other things. Sometimes, we wondered if he was going to be absent minded for the rest of his life. Over time, things got better and better. As he matured and hit the later elementary grades, we hardly ever had to get after him to stay on task. He continued to focus and excelled during his high school and college days.

Today, we are going to see how people may find it difficult to stay on task for the Lord. It is easy to get our attention drawn away by other things or to simply get discouraged when what we are doing takes too long. We will be reminded of the importance of continual obedience and letting God be God to perform all that He wants to perform.

### What Does the Bible Say?

Moses was discouraged by the rejection of the Israelites and God was patiently encouraging him to continue in the task that he had been called to do. God told Moses that he would be like God to Pharaoh and that Aaron would be like a prophet who did the speaking for God. Moses didn't have to do the talking, but Aaron would do it for him. (Remember at the end of chapter 7, Moses declared his inability to speak well.) They were not to give up, but to go to Pharaoh once again and insist that he let the children of Israel go. This time, it appears the request was not for a three days journey to worship God, but this was a request to permanently allow them to go. God knew that Pharaoh would not listen and his heart would be hardened by the requests. God was about to do several miraculous things, but Pharaoh would not listen. Eventually, the Egyptians would see the mighty hand of God and God's judgement would force Pharaoh to agree to their request to leave the land. God had convinced Moses and Aaron to continue their mission and to once again

go to Pharaoh and ask for the freedom for the Israelites (vs 1-7).

Up to this point, Moses had only shown the miraculous signs that God had given him to the leaders of Israel. Now, God had instructed him to show these signs to Pharaoh. Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as God had instructed them to do. He threw down his rod and it became a serpent. Pharaoh must have been somewhat impressed, but not completely. He called for his magicians and they repeated what Moses had done, and through their sorcery and tricks, they were able to mimic the miracle that Moses had done. Yet, the interesting thing about this was that the staff of Moses which had turned into a snake, swallowed up the other staffs of the Egyptians that had turned into snakes. Even though this revealed that God was more powerful than the gods of the Egyptians, the Pharaoh would not listen, but hardened his heart even more (vs 8-13).

We will see tomorrow that as the plagues started, the Egyptian sorcerers were able to copy the first few miracles that Moses did. How they were able to do this remains a mystery. The most obvious answer is that demonic forces were at work, and though they are powerful and may have had the ability to mimic the power of God to a degree, the fact that the sorcerer's snakes were eaten up indicates that God is more powerful than the strongest demonic forces.

## **How Does this Apply to Me?**

Are you willing to be faithful to the task that God has called you to? Sometimes the things that God has called you to are not easy. They will take time and effort and you may deal with rejection, yet if God has called you to it, He has a plan and purpose. Moses must have imagined that the staff turning into a snake would convince Pharaoh. Though he may have been slightly impressed, the wicked forces were there to take any seed of submission out of Pharaoh's mind. Your enemy is alive and active today and is battling against what God wants to accomplish through you. You must choose not to give up obeying God even if it seems difficult or impossible. It was going to take Moses many tries to accomplish the task and get Pharaoh to agree, yet he was given the simple instructions to remain faithful to the task. This is a great lesson for you today. Perhaps you are in the middle of a very unfruitful or difficult season of life. Maybe you are just coming out of or entering into one of those times. Let the lesson from Scripture today remind you of your need for consistency and faithfulness to God.

What did God say Moses and Aaron were like (vs 1)?

What do you think He meant by this?

What responsibilities did God give to Moses and Aaron (vs 2)?

What was God going to do to Pharaoh's heart (vs 3)?

Why do you think God emphasized that this would happen even though great miracles would be done?

How does this reveal that your obedience to God may not produce the results you are looking for?

Why is faithfulness so important when you don't see the desired results?

How did God say He would change Pharaoh's mind (vs 4)?

What would the Egyptians know (vs 5)?

What important step did Moses and Aaron take (vs 6)?

What ages were Moses and Aaron (vs 7)?

Why do you think their ages were given?

What was God's plan when they went to Pharaoh (vs 9)?

How did Moses and Aaron carry out God's plan (vs 10)?

How did Pharaoh respond (vs 11)?

How do you think they were able to perform this miracle (vs 11)?

What happened to the staffs of the Egyptian sorcerers (vs 12)?

What happened to Pharaoh's heart after this (vs 13)?

What does this reveal about human nature?

# “The Plagues Begin”

**Study:** Exodus 7:14-8:15

**Reading:** –

**Memory:** Proverbs 3:17

## What Does the Bible Say?

Pharaoh did not believe that the God of the Israelites was stronger than his gods, and even after the staff of Moses ate up the other staffs, he refused to believe. It was time for the Lord to start sending plagues upon Egypt. Moses was instructed to go to the Nile River and meet the Pharaoh there. He was to once again confront Pharaoh and tell him that the God of Israel had commanded Egypt to let the Israelites leave the land. He was to also tell Pharaoh that since Pharaoh had refused so far, the God of Israel was going to bring problems to Egypt. Moses told Pharaoh that the Nile River would turn to blood which would result in all the fish dying. The river would begin to stink and the drinking water from the river would go bad. Then Aaron was told to stretch out his staff causing all the water in the land of Egypt to be filled with blood, even the water that was already in pots and other vessels (vs 14-19).

Moses and Aaron did as they were commanded and God upheld his part, causing all the water to turn into blood. We are told that the sorcerers of Egypt were able to repeat this miracle and we are also told that the Egyptians had to get water by digging around the Nile. The water the sorcerers used must have come from digging it up and the people had to do a great deal of extra work to provide water for themselves. After his sorcerers were able to repeat the plague, Pharaoh scoffed at Moses and didn't think twice about the power God had displayed. The Nile was full of blood for seven days, and though that plague was quite inconvenient, the heart of Pharaoh became hardened even more (vs 20-25).

Once again, Moses was instructed to go to Pharaoh and ask for the release of the Israelites. He was to warn Pharaoh that refusal would only bring greater problems to Egypt. This time, God would send frogs to swarm the land and fill the houses. It would be so bad that the people would be able to find no where to get away from the frogs. Pharaoh did not listen and Moses instructed Aaron to stretch out his staff and bring the plague of frogs upon the Egyptians. Just as they did with the blood, the

sorcerers were able to somehow reproduce this miracle (most likely through demonic power). Pharaoh thought a little more about this plague though and called for Moses and Aaron and pleaded with them to ask God to take away the frogs. He told Moses and Aaron that if God removed the frogs, he would let the children of Israel go to sacrifice to the Lord. When Moses asked Pharaoh when the Israelites could go, he told Moses that they could leave the next day. Moses agreed to ask God to remove the frogs, and return them back to their natural course. Moses talked with God and God stopped the frogs coming out of the river, but the existing frogs did not go back into the river. Rather, they died on the land and in the houses. Once the frogs were gone, Pharaoh changed his mind and refused to let the Israelites go (vs 1-15).

Many scholars have noted that many of the plagues seem to have been directed at the things that the Egyptians worshiped. It appears that God was not only causing problems but was making a point to let the Israelites know that He was the God who was greater than all other gods of Egypt.

## How Does this Apply to Me?

There are two almost opposite points that can be learned from this. The first is that God is bigger and stronger than any god this world wants to worship. Though in our western society today we do not worship gods like Egypt did, we trust in our own power and strength. We trust in our science, our money, our military and ourselves. Yet, in an instant, God has the power and ability to show us who is really in control.

The second lesson has to do with the hardness of man's heart. Have you ever wondered why someone who is going through many difficult times refuses to turn to God? You may think that surely this heartache or tragedy will cause them to look to God, but that is not always the case. People will often be like Pharaoh and turn to God for their problem to go away, but once it does, they go right back to the way they were living. Understanding this can help you avoid becoming discouraged with others and know there is hope. Just as God eventually got the attention of Pharaoh, He can get the attention of those who are rejecting Him.

## Suggestions for Prayer

- \* *Ask God to help you believe that He is a big God.*
- \* *Thank God for doing what it takes to break down pride.*

## **Memorization**

*Proverbs 3:1 My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments, 2 for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you. 3 Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. 4 So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man. 5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. 7 Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. 8 It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones. 9 Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; 10 then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine. 11 My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline or be weary of his reproof, 12 for the LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights. 13 Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who gets understanding, 14 for the gain from her is better than gain from silver and her profit better than gold. 15 She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her. 16 Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. 17 Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.*