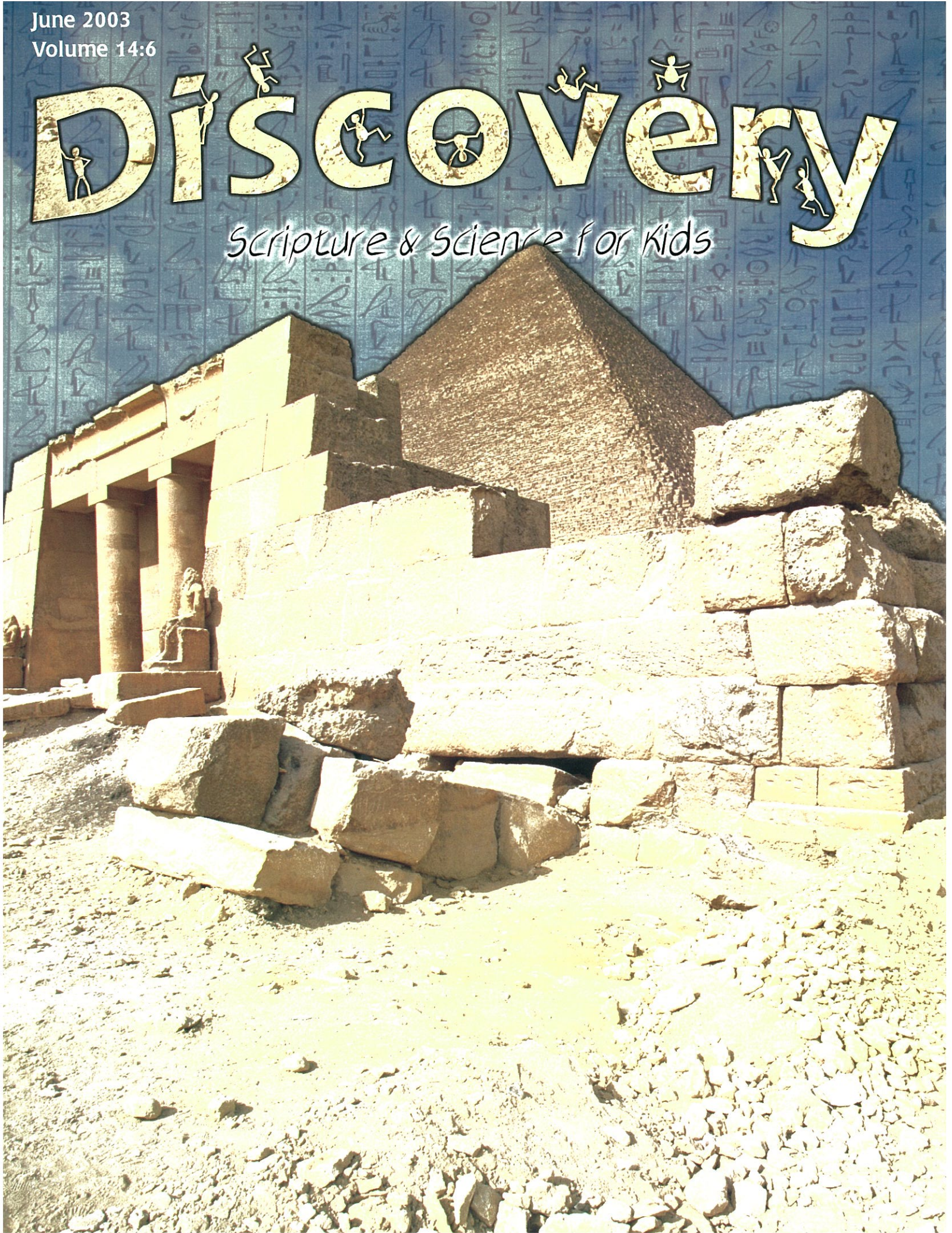
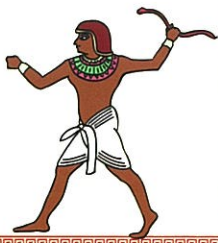


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Discovery

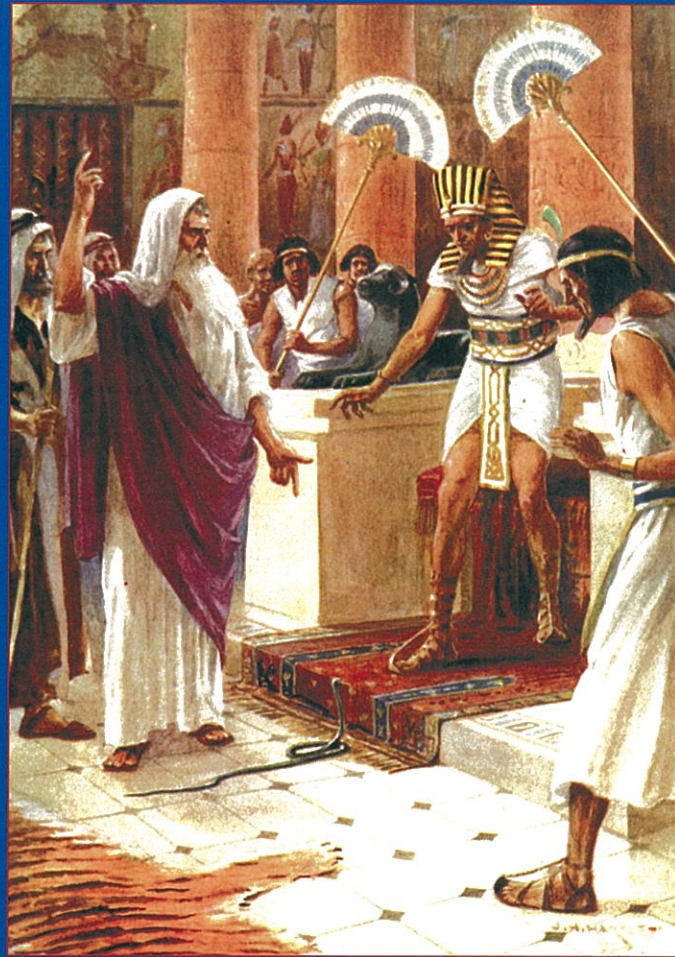
Scripture & Science for Kids





Moses was eighty years old when God spoke to him from the burning bush. God told Moses he must return to Egypt, go before Pharaoh, and speak God's words to him. Moses did not want to go, and offered five excuses to keep from doing what God instructed him to do. We, too, sometimes hesitate to do what we know God wants us to do.

The first excuse that Moses made was that he was a "nobody." But God said He would be with him. His second excuse was that he would not know what to tell the Israelites if they asked him for God's name. God told him to tell them, "I Am Who I Am," meaning that God has always existed. His third excuse was that he would not know what to do if the Egyptians did not believe him. God told him to throw his shepherd's crook, or rod, on the ground. God turned it into a snake, causing Moses to run from it! But then God told him to pick the snake up by the tail. When he did so, the snake turned back into a rod. God also told Moses to place his hand inside his shirt. When he took it back out, it was infected with the deadly skin disease of leprosy. When he put it back in his shirt like God said, it was restored to its former healthy condition. His fourth excuse was that he was



MOSES CONFRONTS PHARAOH

DAVE MILLER

not a good speaker. But God told him he could take his brother with him. His fifth excuse was that someone else could go. But God told him that taking his brother and his rod with him would enable him to do well. So, finally, Moses agreed to do what God wanted him to do. He took with him his rod, and his brother, Aaron, even as God had instructed.

At his first meeting with Pharaoh, Moses and Aaron informed him that God required him to release the Israelites. Pharaoh defiantly responded: "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice...?" (Exodus 5:2). The second time they met with Pharaoh,

Aaron threw down his rod, and God turned it into a snake. But Pharaoh's magicians were able to do the same thing. Then Aaron's snake swallowed all the other snakes! God does not have to resort to tricks and deceit. What He does is real!

Since Pharaoh still would not obey, God had to punish him and motivate him to obey. So God brought upon him ten terrible afflictions. These plagues were meant to gain the release of the Israelites. But more important, they showed Pharaoh, Egypt, and the world, that God is the one true God (Exodus 9:16).

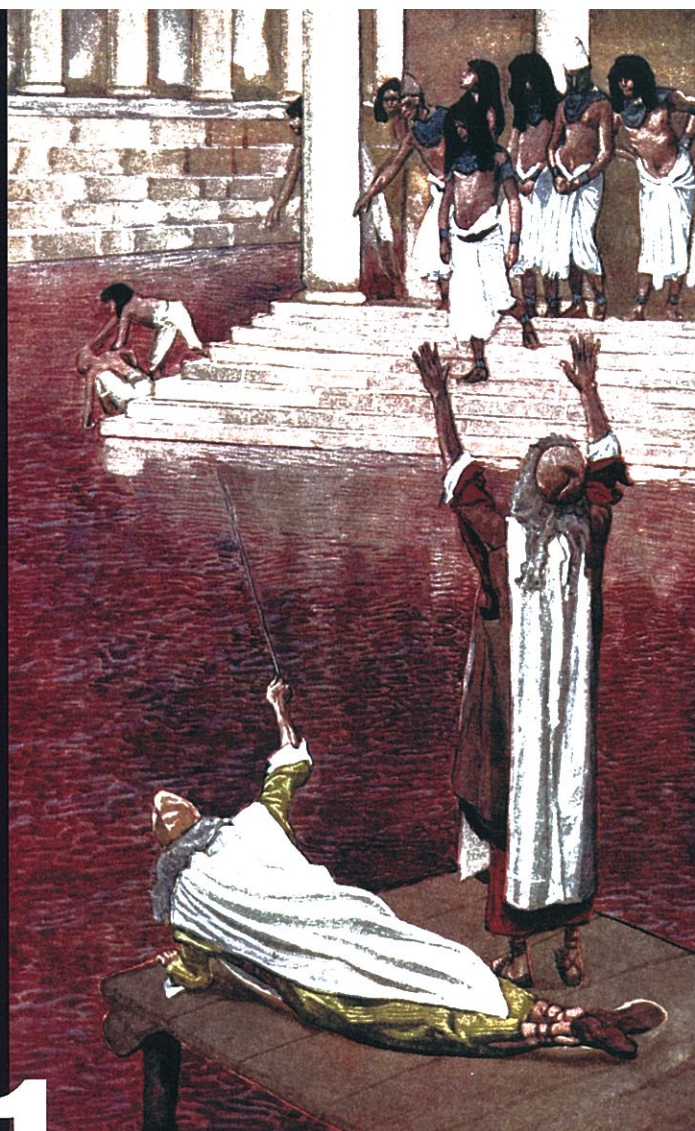
GOD against the gods!

KYLE BUTT

Can you imagine being an Egyptian during the time of the ten plagues? Think about how scared you would be, and how much you would have wished that Pharaoh would just release the Israelites. You might even have wondered why there were ten plagues, and what was important about each plague. After all, God could have used any plagues He wanted. He could have sent thousands of lions among the Egyptians, or He could have caused alligators to eat the people. Why did God choose the plagues that He did?

The Bible gives us a hint about why God chose the ten plagues. In Exodus 12:12, Moses recorded these words spoken by God: "For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord." God said that the plagues were against the gods of Egypt.

During the time of Moses, the Egyptians worshipped many different gods. They did not worship the one true God like Moses and the children of Israel. The Egyptians named different gods that were supposed to be in control of different areas of life. Each plague sent by the true God was designed to show the Egyptians that the gods they worshipped were false gods who could not control nature. Only the true God had (and still has) the power to control nature. Let's look at each plague and see which Egyptian gods were proved false.



1 WATER TO BLOOD

The entire life of Egypt revolved around the Nile River. The Nile brought food to the Egyptians in the form of fish. It watered the crops and fertilized the land with the rich silt (dirt) that it deposited on its banks. The Egyptians literally worshipped the Nile as a god because it brought life. The Egyptian god Hapi was supposed to be the spirit of the Nile who controlled the water. The god Osiris supposedly used the Nile for his bloodstream. However, when God changed the Nile to blood, the river that once had brought so much life to the Egyptians brought only death and destruction. The Bible says: "The fish that were in the river died, the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink the water of the river. So there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt" (Exodus 7:21).

2 FROGS

Frogs were a common sight in the land of Egypt. The Nile River was a great place for frogs to live. The Egyptians chose frogs to represent Heket (also spelled Heka or Heqt). Heket was the goddess of fertility. She is drawn on many walls with



the body of a woman and the head of a frog. Supposedly, Heket helped women

deliver babies. To the Egyptians, frogs were a sign of fertility. In fact, it has been reported that anyone who injured a frog could be severely punished. Because of this, God sent thousands of frogs on the land. Imagine getting out of bed and seeing frogs in your shoes, clothes, sink, and shower. Just think about going to the kitchen and finding frogs in all the dishes and bowls. Since frogs were sacred, the Egyptians did not feel that they could kill the frogs. God used the frogs to show the Egyptians that they were worshipping the wrong things. When God caused the frogs to die, the Egyptians' precious frogs that represented fertility became a sign of death. When the frogs died, the Bible says, "They gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank" (Exodus 8:14). How disgusting!

3 LICE (OR GNATS)

The Hebrew word used to describe the third plague means some type of tiny insect like lice or gnats. These tiny insects came from the ground and infested both people and animals in Egypt. They



Tiny lice would have caused itching, scabs, and infection. The magicians of Pharaoh could not copy Moses by bringing lice (Exodus 8:18).

would have crawled in the eyes, noses, and mouths of the Egyptians. According to the Egyptians, Geb was the god who controlled the dirt and the land. But when God caused the dust to turn into nasty little insects, He proved that Geb was not in

control of the land. And whatever the true God ordered to come out of the ground, did so.

4 FLIES

Moses was told by God to warn Pharaoh that swarms would be sent if Pharaoh did not obey. These swarms would have been insects like flies or beetles. Again, the Hebrew word used does not tell us exactly what kind of insects these were. When we read about these swarms of flies or beetles, remember that they were probably not like the flies we swat in our kitchens with fly swatters. These bugs could probably bite or sting. When we look back into Egyptian history, we find that the scarab beetle was considered sacred. This plague was probably against the god Khepfi, who was supposed to be in control of insects.



COMPTON TUCKER, NASA GFSC

Swarming bugs like flies and beetles can be irritating and damaging to crops and trees. Just imagine bugs like these swarming in your house and yard!

5 DEATH OF THE LIVESTOCK

When God sent death on the Egyptians' livestock, He proved that their god, Apis, could not stop Him. Apis was shown in Egyptian art as a bull. In one discovery in Egypt, several huge burial tombs were found with "sacred" bulls buried inside. How silly it was for the Egyptians to worship something that God could destroy in a few days.



6 BOILS

Boils came upon the Egyptians when Moses scattered ashes into the air. These boils would have been very painful swellings on the skin filled with puss and infection. The Egyptians worshipped the goddess Sekhmet, who they thought had the power over diseases. The god Thoth was also supposed to help with healing. Yet, the Bible says that even the magicians in Egypt had boils (Exodus 9:11). If the magicians of the Egyptian gods could not stop the boils, how did Pharaoh think he could stop the God Who caused the boils?



APHIS.USDA.GOV

Infectious boils broke out on humans and on the Egyptian livestock (Exodus 9:9). This cow's neck is covered with lumps that resemble boils.

7 HAIL

When God sent this plague upon the Egyptians, it wasn't a few pea-sized pellets of ice. On several occasions, the Bible says that the hail was "very heavy." It was so heavy, in fact, that it killed all the men and animals that were



NOAA.GOV

On April 28, 2002, in Pomerfret, Maryland, baseball-size hail pelted the city. Heavy hail like this does millions of dollars in damage.

not under some type of shelter. Along with this hail came fire from the sky. This plague destroyed many of the crops and trees of the land. However, in the land of Goshen where the Israelites lived, there was no hail.

8 LOCUSTS

Huge swarms of millions of locusts have been documented around Africa. One swarm affected an area of five million square miles (twice as much land as in the United States). Locusts can eat their own body weight in food every day. With the locusts, God destroyed what was left of the crops in Egypt. He also proved that Seth, the god of the crops, was not really a god after all.



COMPTON TUCKER, NASA GFSC

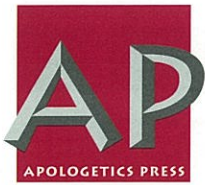
9 DARKNESS

The darkness caused as the ninth plague was unlike any we have ever experienced. Exodus 10:21 says that it was a darkness "which may even be felt." This plague was against one of the Egyptians most important gods, Ra—the Sun god. Ra was thought to be one of the strongest gods. He faithfully crossed the sky day by day, bringing sunshine and life to the crops, and joy to the people. The Egyptians wrote poems and songs of worship about Ra, the powerful Sun god. Yet, when the true God sent darkness across the land, Ra lost all his power (although he never really had any to start with).

10 DEATH OF THE FIRST-BORN

Throughout all the plagues, Pharaoh would not obey God. Pharaoh should have repented and let the Israelites go after God defeated all the gods of Egypt, but Pharaoh would not. For this reason, God sent one more plague—the death of all the first-born in Egypt. Pharaoh was often worshipped as a god, and his first-born son would take his place. By striking Pharaoh's first-born, God proved once and for all that no god could match the powers of the true, living God.





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 ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

PASSING OVER



THE ISRAELITES

ERIC LYONS

If it were not for monuments and memorials, men and women would quickly forget certain people, places, and events that meant so much to them at one time. If it were not for the U.S. flag, Americans would be more likely to forget the men and women who died for our freedom. If it were not for things like the Washington Monument or the Lincoln Memorial, we might forget some of the greatest leaders in American history. Memorials serve a great purpose.

Throughout the Bible, God and His servants put great emphasis on remembering special events by setting up various memorials. Jacob, Samuel, and Joshua all set up stones on differ-

ent occasions to remember special events. Jesus instituted a memorial feast just before His death, which Christians eat every first day of the week (Luke 22:14-20). One special memorial that God set up for the Israelites was called the Passover.

Following the ninth plague that God sent upon the Egyptians, He told Moses and Aaron that the final plague would be the death of all of the first-born in the land of Egypt—both of men and of animals (Exodus 11-12). Moses informed the Israelites that in order for them to be spared of such a plague, and be released from their bondage, they would have to take a lamb that was without defect, and kill it on the fourteenth day of the month of Abib. Then, they were to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and the top of the doorframes of the houses where the lamb was eaten. This blood was a sign to the Lord. When He passed through Egypt, striking dead all of the first-born, and saw the lamb's blood on the doorframes of the Israelites, He **passed over** their houses, and did not allow destruction to come upon them.

God instituted the Passover feast so that future Israelite generations would not forget their God-given deliverance from Egypt. In the New Testament, the apostle Paul compared Christ to the Passover lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7). Similar to how the Israelites were saved with the blood of a lamb, today God's people (Christians) are saved through the blood of Jesus (Matthew 26:28).

ANSWERS

ACTIVITY PAGES MAY BE COPIED FOR MULTIPLE STUDENT USE

COMPLETE THE BIBLE VERSE: 1. first-born, gods; 2. Christ; 3. Moses, Pharaoh; 4. blood, pass; 5. blood, remission. CROSSWORD CHALLENGE: Down 1-Hapl; 2-Aaron; 3-eighty; 4-memorials; 6-Egyptians; Across 5-Israelites; 7-locusts; 8-Passover; 9-excuses. PUT THE PLAGUES IN ORDER: 1. C (Water to blood); 2. J (Frogs); 3. G (Lice or gnats); 4. A (Flies); 5. B (Death of the Livestock); 6. D (Boils); 7. H (Hail); 8. F (Locusts); 9. E (Darkness); 10. I (Death of the First-born).