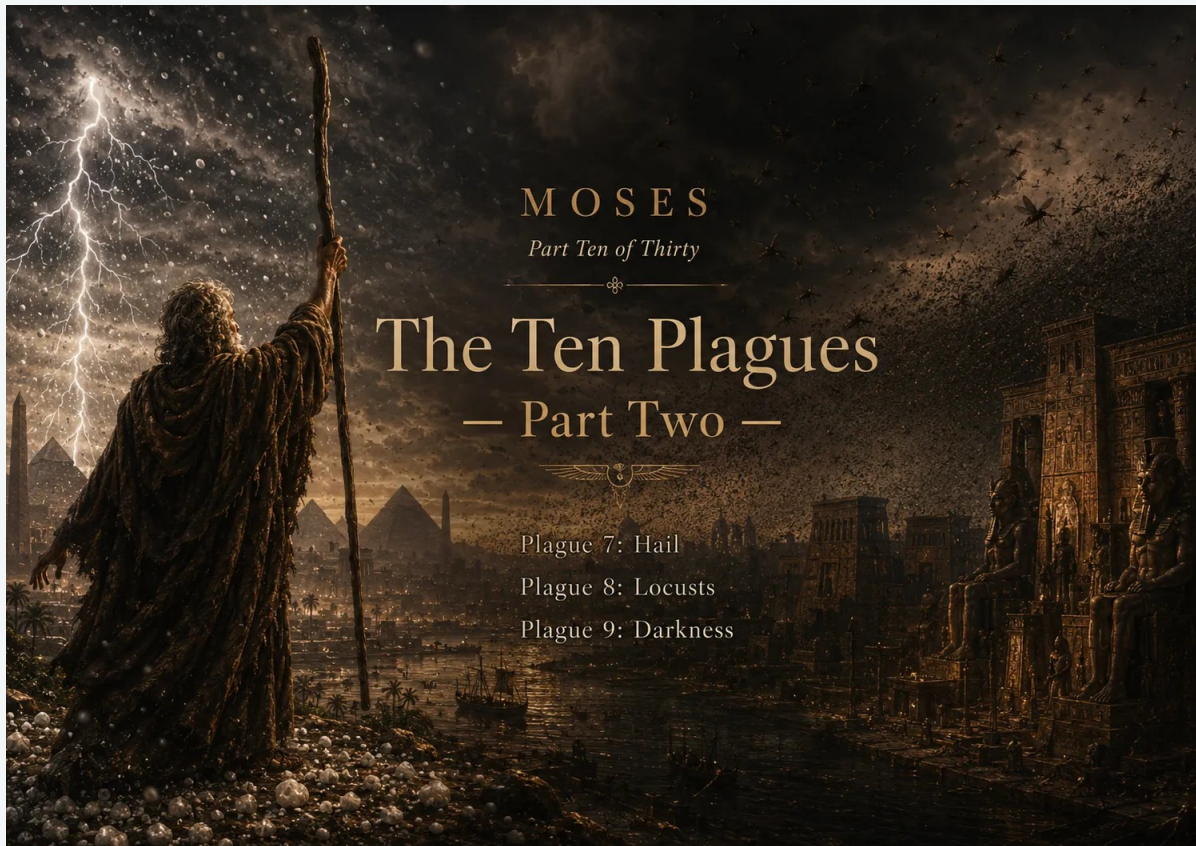


WOVEN & KNOWN

BIBLE STUDY • THEOLOGY • FORMATION



MOSES

Part Ten of Thirty

The Ten Plagues — Part Two —

Plague 7: Hail

Plague 8: Locusts

Plague 9: Darkness

MOSES SERIES

Part Ten of Thirty

The Ten Plagues - Part Two

A deeper study guide for Exodus 9:13-10:29: hail, locusts, darkness, Pharaoh's cracking court, incomplete repentance, the buildup to Passover, and the light that points to Christ.

"For this very purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power."

Exodus chapter nine, verse sixteen

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How to Use This Study Guide

This companion guide takes Part Ten beyond the article into deeper theological reflection, biblical intertextual study, historical context, critical thinking, journaling, self-review, and a word finder activity. The article tells the story of Plagues Seven through Nine. This guide asks what those plagues mean, why they escalate the way they do, how Pharaoh's court begins to fracture, and how the darkness before Passover points forward to the darkness of the cross.

STUDY RHYTHM

Recommended study rhythm

1. Read Exodus 9:13-10:29 slowly before starting the guide.
2. Mark every time Pharaoh confesses, negotiates, hardens, or refuses.
3. Track the court: magicians, servants, advisors, and the growing fracture around Pharaoh.
4. Compare the ninth plague darkness with Matthew 27:45 and John 1:5.
5. End with the journal prompts and word finder to reinforce what you have learned.

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- 1. Biblical text and learning objectives
- 2. Part Ten at a glance
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- 7. The cracking court: when Pharaoh's own servants see reality
- 8. Pharaoh's four negotiations and why half-freedom is not freedom
- 9. The buildup to Passover: why the first nine plagues make the tenth intelligible
- 10. Christological connections: darkness, light, judgment, and the Lamb
- 11. Critical thinking and seminar lab
- 12. Journaling workbook
- 13. Self-quiz
- 14. Word finder activity
- 15. Answer keys and further reading

1. Biblical Text and Learning Objectives

Read first

- Exodus 9:13-10:29
- Exodus 9:16
- Joel 1:1-12 and Joel 2:1-11
- Psalm 105:28-36
- Romans 9:17
- Matthew 27:45
- John 1:1-5 and John 8:12

By the end of this guide, you should be able to:

- ☐ Explain how Plagues Seven to Nine form the final triad before the Passover night.
- ☐ Identify the Egyptian divine domains targeted by hail, locusts, and darkness.
- ☐ Explain why Exodus 9:20 shows that judgment in the plagues was not indiscriminate.
- ☐ Analyse Pharaoh's confession in Exodus 9 and explain why it was not genuine repentance.
- ☐ Trace the collapse of Pharaoh's court from the magicians' confession to the servants' warning that Egypt is ruined.
- ☐ Explain the significance of "not a hoof shall be left behind" in Exodus 10:26.
- ☐ Connect Plague Nine to Matthew 27:45 and the New Testament's theology of darkness and light.
- ☐ Describe how the first nine plagues prepare the reader to understand Passover.

THE BIG IDEA

Key thesis of Part Ten

Plagues Seven through Nine are the penultimate movement before Passover. Hail destroys the field, locusts strip what remains, and darkness suspends the sun itself. Pharaoh's court begins to see what Pharaoh refuses to see: Egypt is ruined. Yet even here, warning is given, some Egyptians respond, and the narrative prepares us for a final distinction that will no longer be drawn by geography, but by blood.

2. Part Ten at a Glance

Part Ten covers the third plague cycle: hail, locusts, and darkness. The pattern intensifies: public death enters the open field, the remaining crops vanish, and Egypt's supreme solar theology is thrown into three days of darkness.

Plague	Text	Targeted Domain	Key theological shift
Hail	Exodus 9:13-35	Sky, weather,	Warning becomes

		agriculture / Nut, Shu, Tefnut, Seth	urgent; some Egyptians fear the word and survive.
Locusts	Exodus 10:1-20	Harvest, grain, vegetation / Nepri, Renenutet, Min, Osiris	Egypt is stripped bare; Pharaoh's servants say Egypt is ruined.
Darkness	Exodus 10:21-29	Sun, royal theology / Ra and Pharaoh as Son of Ra	The palace is dark while Goshen has light; the final confrontation closes the door.
Passover buildup	Exodus 11-12	Life, death, firstborn, blood	The tenth plague will stand alone; judgment and mercy meet at the doorpost.

3. Where We Are in the Story

The first six plagues have dismantled Egypt's gods one domain at a time: the Nile, fertility, earth, insect life, livestock, and healing. The magicians have confessed limitation and then disappeared. The Goshen distinction has been drawn. Judicial hardening has begun. Part Ten begins with a storm warning that sounds different from everything before it.

NARRATIVE HINGE

Why this section is a hinge

Before the Passover can make sense, Egypt must be shown to have no remaining refuge: not the sky, not the harvest, not the sun, not Pharaoh, and not the gods. The ninth plague will bring the empire to the edge of final judgment, and the tenth will force the question: who is covered by blood?

1. Why do you think Scripture slows down before the final plague rather than rushing straight to Passover?
2. How have the first six plagues prepared Israel to understand the difference between Egypt's gods and YHWH?

4. Plague Seven: Hail, Fire, Warning, and Incomplete Repentance

The seventh plague begins the final triad. Unlike earlier plagues, the warning includes a direct statement of cosmic purpose: Pharaoh has been raised up so that God's power may be shown and His name proclaimed in all the earth.

Egyptian gods targeted

- Nut: sky goddess whose body formed the vault of heaven.
- Shu: god of air, the one who held the sky aloft.
- Tefnut: goddess associated with moisture and weather.
- Seth: god associated with storms and chaos, unable to control the storm YHWH sends.

DETAIL MOST MISS

Exodus 9:20 - the overlooked mercy inside judgment

Whoever feared the word of the LORD among Pharaoh's servants hurried their own servants and livestock inside. This is one of the most important verses in the plague narrative. It shows that the warning was available even to Egyptians, and those who trusted the word of YHWH lived. Judgment is precise. Response matters.

Natural science and theological purpose

The text describes hail and fire flashing in the midst of the hail, which closely resembles a supercell thunderstorm with embedded lightning. The natural description does not weaken the theological claim. The timing, warning, scale, and Goshen distinction mark the storm as an act of YHWH. Creation itself is obeying its Creator against Egypt's gods.

Pharaoh's confession: why it was not repentance

Pharaoh says, "This time I have sinned." The phrase "this time" is the fatal qualifier. He is not confessing his whole posture of rebellion. He is admitting that this particular crisis has become too painful. Suffering produces confession; relief produces retraction. That is crisis management, not repentance.

3. What is the difference between fearing the word of the LORD and merely fearing consequences?

4. Why is "this time I have sinned" an incomplete confession?

5. How can pressure produce words that sound like repentance without producing true surrender?

5. Plague Eight: Locusts, Memory, and Egypt Ruined

The eighth plague introduces a generational purpose statement. The plagues are not only signs performed in Egypt; they are testimony designed to be told to sons and grandsons. God intends the Exodus to become a story that shapes memory across generations.

Egyptian gods targeted

- Nepri: grain god and protector of the harvest.
- Renenutet: harvest goddess associated with protection from crop destruction and vermin.
- Min: god of fertility and agricultural abundance.
- Osiris: associated with vegetation, death, and renewal.

GENERATIONS

The plagues are designed to be told

Exodus 10:1-2 explains that the signs were meant to be remembered and retold. The Exodus is not merely experienced history. It is commanded memory. That is why Passover becomes an annual act of storytelling: the event is preserved by being narrated again and again.

The servants speak: Egypt is ruined

Before Moses and Aaron are even brought back, Pharaoh's servants ask, "Do you not yet understand that Egypt is ruined?" This is one of the clearest signs that Pharaoh's court is cracking. The people closest to the system now see what the king refuses to admit.

Pharaoh's third negotiation

Pharaoh offers to let only the men go. Moses refuses. Israel's worship is generational: young and old, sons and daughters, flocks and herds. A liberation that leaves the children in Egypt is not liberation. It is Pharaoh keeping the future as collateral.

6. Why does God connect the plague of locusts to telling children and grandchildren?

7. What does it reveal when Pharaoh's servants see reality more clearly than Pharaoh?

8. Why is leaving the children behind spiritually unacceptable?

6. Plague Nine: Darkness, Ra, Goshen Light, and the Final Confrontation

The ninth plague is the deepest theological inversion before the final night. Egypt's sun theology is suspended. The Son of Ra sits in darkness while Hebrew slaves have light where they live.

Darkness you could feel

The Hebrew phrase describes darkness that can be felt or groped through. This is not ordinary night or a cloudy sky. It is a tactile darkness, a bodily judgment, a darkness that stops movement and paralyzes ordinary life.

Ra and Pharaoh

- Ra was the supreme sun deity and a central figure in Egyptian royal theology.
- Pharaoh was styled as Son of Ra, so darkness strikes both Egypt's religion and Pharaoh's claim to divine authority.
- For three days, the palace has no light while Goshen has light.
- The bottom becomes the top: slaves have what the king does not.

FINAL NEGOTIATION

Not a hoof shall be left behind

Pharaoh's final offer is economically calculated: go, but leave the livestock. Moses refuses with concrete specificity. Not a hoof. Israel cannot worship with what Pharaoh allows them to keep. They belong wholly to YHWH: people, children, animals, future, sacrifice, and livelihood.

9. Why is the darkness plague such a direct challenge to Pharaoh's identity?

10. What does "not a hoof shall be left behind" teach about total surrender?

11. How does Goshen's light change the way you understand belonging to God in a dark season?

7. The Cracking Court

Part Ten shows that Pharaoh is becoming increasingly isolated. His magicians have already confessed limitation and then disappeared. His servants begin to act independently by fearing the word of YHWH. Then they confront Pharaoh openly: Egypt is ruined.

Timeline of collapse

- Plague Three: the magicians say, “This is the finger of God.” First crack in Egyptian religious authority.
- Plague Six: the magicians cannot stand before Moses. Religious-medical power collapses publicly.
- Plague Seven: some servants fear the word and bring people and animals inside. Individual conscience acts independently of royal hardness.
- Plague Eight: Pharaoh’s servants warn him that Egypt is ruined. The court’s reality-check contradicts the king.
- After Plague Nine: Pharaoh expels Moses permanently. He sends away the last intercessor available to him.

HEART DIAGNOSIS

Pastoral principle

A hardened heart gradually loses its reality-checking relationships. It stops listening first to God, then to wise advisors, then to evidence, then to mercy. By the end, Pharaoh expels the one person who has repeatedly prayed for relief.

12. How does Pharaoh’s isolation develop across the plagues?

13. Why is it spiritually dangerous to silence people who tell us the truth?

8. Pharaoh’s Four Negotiations

Across the plague narrative Pharaoh offers four partial concessions. Each sounds reasonable at first glance, but each preserves some form of Egyptian control. Moses refuses each one because YHWH is not negotiating for partial freedom.

Offer	What it means	Why Moses refuses
Sacrifice here in Egypt	Stay under Pharaoh’s system.	You cannot worship YHWH while remaining under Egypt’s authority.
Go, but not too far	Stay within reach.	Half-freedom is still control.
Only the men may go	Leave the families and future behind.	The covenant includes children and generations.
Go, but leave the livestock	Leave sacrifice, wealth, and	Not a hoof: all of Israel’s life

economic future behind.

belongs to YHWH.

14. Which of Pharaoh's four negotiations is most tempting in modern discipleship?

15. Where might "go, but not too far" appear in a person's faith today?

9. The Buildup to Passover

Nine plagues prepare the reader to understand Passover. Without the plagues, Passover can feel like a strange ritual. With the plagues, every part of it makes sense: blood, lamb, urgency, distinction, and firstborn.

- Blood on the doorposts makes sense after the Nile turned to blood: blood is now the language of judgment and covenant protection.
- The lamb makes sense after livestock and sacred animals have been judged: what Egypt worshipped becomes Israel's meal of freedom.
- The urgency makes sense after nine hardenings: when Pharaoh finally says go, Israel cannot wait.
- The Goshen distinction culminates in the blood distinction: the boundary is no longer only geography but obedience marked by blood.
- The firstborn plague answers Pharaoh's opening violence against Hebrew sons and God's declaration that Israel is His firstborn son.

PASSOVER LOGIC

Passover is the answer the plagues create the question for

The first nine plagues teach that YHWH rules every domain Egypt thought its gods controlled. The tenth teaches that He rules life and death. Passover reveals how judgment and mercy meet: not through innocence, but through blood.

16. Which element of Passover becomes clearer after studying the first nine plagues?

17. Why is the blood on the doorpost the final Goshen distinction?

10. Christological Connections: Darkness, Light, Judgment, and the Lamb

The New Testament repeatedly uses Exodus imagery to explain Jesus. Part Ten is especially important because Plague Nine's darkness and the Passover buildup converge in the cross.

Darkness at Calvary

Matthew 27:45 records darkness from the sixth hour to the ninth hour while Jesus hangs on the cross. Every Jewish reader would hear the echo of Egypt's three days of darkness. But the direction is inverted: in Egypt, darkness falls on the oppressor while Israel has light. At Calvary, darkness falls on the innocent Son so that light can be offered to the guilty.

The light of the world

John opens with the claim that the light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. Jesus then declares, "I am the light of the world." The God who kept the lights on in Goshen becomes flesh and enters the darkness of human history.

The Lamb is coming

Part Ten ends with the lamb coming. The New Testament names Jesus as "the Lamb of God" and "Christ our Passover." The plagues teach the cost of judgment; Passover reveals the covering of blood; the cross fulfils the pattern by the Lamb bearing judgment Himself.

CHRIST CONNECTION

The ninth plague and the ninth hour

The ninth plague is darkness before Passover. The ninth hour is the end of darkness at the cross. The pattern is not accidental in Christian reading: judgment, darkness, blood, and deliverance all converge in Jesus.

18. How does the darkness at the cross deepen the meaning of Plague Nine?

19. Why does the New Testament identify Jesus not merely with Moses, but with the Passover Lamb?

11. Critical Thinking and Seminar Lab

Seminar prompt A: Was Pharaoh's confession genuine?

20. Use Exodus 9:27-35 to analyse Pharaoh's confession. What does he say correctly? What is missing? What proves the confession was incomplete?

Seminar prompt B: Warning, judgment, and mercy

21. Exodus 9:20 shows some Egyptians responding to YHWH's warning. How does this complicate simplistic readings of the plagues as indiscriminate judgment?

Seminar prompt C: Darkness as theological event

22. Compare Exodus 10:21-23, Matthew 27:45, John 1:5, and John 8:12. How does Scripture use darkness as more than a physical condition?

Mini research task

23. Research one Egyptian deity connected to Plagues Seven through Nine and write a short paragraph explaining why that domain matters in the plague narrative.

12. Journalling Workbook

When relief becomes retraction

Pharaoh hardened again when the hail stopped. Where have you promised change under pressure, then returned to old patterns once the pressure lifted?

Fear the word and act

Some Egyptians feared the word of the LORD and moved quickly. What warning, instruction, or prompting do you need to act on rather than merely agree with?

Egypt is ruined

Pharaoh's servants could name reality before Pharaoh could. Who in your life helps you name reality honestly?

Only the men may go

Where are you tempted to separate faith from family, future, finances, or daily life?

Not a hoof

What part of your life are you tempted to leave under Pharaoh's control while trying to follow God elsewhere?

Light where they lived

Where do you need to receive the promise that darkness is not the final word for those who belong to God?

13. Self-Quiz

Try answering without looking back. Then check the answer key later in the guide.

1. Which plague begins the final triad before Passover?

- A. Boils
 - B. Hail
 - C. Locusts
 - D. Darkness
-

2. What key verse says Pharaoh was raised up so God's name would be proclaimed?

- A. Exodus 8:19
 - B. Exodus 9:16
 - C. Exodus 10:7
 - D. Exodus 12:2
-

3. What did some of Pharaoh's servants do before the hail?

- A. Hid in temples
 - B. Hardened their hearts
 - C. Feared the word and brought people and livestock inside
 - D. Fled to Goshen
-

4. Which plague causes Pharaoh's servants to say Egypt is ruined?

- A. Hail
 - B. Locusts
 - C. Darkness
 - D. Firstborn
-

5. Which Egyptian deity is most directly challenged by the darkness plague?

- A. Ra
 - B. Heqet
 - C. Hathor
 - D. Geb
-

6. What does Moses mean by "not a hoof shall be left behind"?

- A. Only the priests may go
- B. Israel's livestock must remain as collateral
- C. Everything belonging to Israel must go because all of life belongs to YHWH

D. Pharaoh can keep the children

7. What Gospel event echoes the ninth plague darkness?

- A. Jesus walking on water
- B. The darkness at the crucifixion
- C. Pentecost fire
- D. The feeding of the five thousand

8. Explain why Exodus 9:20 is important for understanding God's mercy inside judgment.

9. Describe why Pharaoh's confession after the hail was not genuine repentance.

10. Name two ways Plague Nine challenges Egyptian theology.

11. Explain how Plagues Seven through Nine prepare the reader for Passover.

14. Word Finder Activity

Find the key words from Part Ten. Words may run forward, backward, up, down, or diagonally.

Words: HAIL, LOCUSTS, DARKNESS, GOSHEN, PHARAOH, MOSES, AARON, PASSOVER, LAMB, BLOOD, LIGHT, RA, NUT, SETH, NEPRI, RENENUTET, HARDENED, HOOF, EGYPT, WARNING

U	O	T	G	S	A	T	E	T	U	N	E	N	E	R	E	D	P	T	Y
I	A	R	Y	C	L	F	Q	O	K	X	Z	Y	H	P	U	O	N	R	C
G	X	C	F	A	T	T	A	C	D	K	U	F	J	T	A	T	O	E	W
L	W	R	M	G	B	R	Q	A	Z	U	U	E	D	T	E	Z	N	V	J
I	D	M	F	I	C	D	V	M	H	N	G	V	E	Q	S	S	L	O	L
N	C	B	T	T	G	F	P	A	A	Y	L	F	O	U	K	P	Y	S	M
V	F	Q	W	X	F	O	R	Q	P	L	U	H	K	I	A	H	A	S	U
V	C	E	A	Q	K	D	S	T	T	W	P	U	H	Y	T	A	E	A	E
T	E	H	C	U	E	W	D	H	L	K	R	H	O	O	F	R	B	P	Y
Y	H	B	Q	N	B	K	Q	N	E	O	D	Q	H	I	F	A	Z	Y	I
Z	D	K	E	T	F	A	G	L	P	N	C	W	F	Z	B	O	H	S	H
T	T	D	E	W	H	G	L	R	X	T	G	U	V	K	W	H	S	V	S
L	I	A	H	N	S	G	Q	S	R	C	H	P	S	G	T	E	J	M	S
P	K	U	W	E	A	E	I	D	O	B	H	W	P	T	N	P	P	T	F
S	Y	S	J	P	D	P	S	L	U	X	T	U	N	K	S	N	F	E	F
C	B	A	V	R	J	N	M	O	G	N	I	N	R	A	W	H	R	V	B
G	A	M	B	I	Y	E	Q	B	M	D	P	A	F	O	D	A	T	K	L
T	R	I	A	L	F	N	O	R	A	A	D	W	N	C	F	N	I	M	O

J	J	O	K	L	L	E	V	C	J	Z	N	H	E	V	B	U	D	N	O
Z	K	U	M	K	Z	Z	F	O	V	M	R	U	U	D	N	N	P	C	D

15. Answer Keys and Further Reading

Self-Quiz Answer Key

1. B
2. B
3. C
4. B
5. A
6. C
7. B

Suggested short-answer themes: Exodus 9:20 shows judgment is not indiscriminate and that Egyptians who feared the word could live; Pharaoh's confession was crisis management without surrender; Plague Nine challenges Ra and Pharaoh's solar identity; Plagues Seven through Nine destroy field, harvest, and light, preparing the reader for blood, lamb, firstborn, and Passover.

Word Finder Answer Key

HAIL: (4,13) -> (1,13)

LOCUSTS: (10,9) -> (16,15)

DARKNESS: (12,18) -> (19,11)

GOSHEN: (6,6) -> (11,11)

PHARAOH: (17,6) -> (17,12)

MOSES: (10,17) -> (6,13)

AARON: (11,18) -> (7,18)

PASSOVER: (19,9) -> (19,2)

LAMB: (5,19) -> (2,16)

BLOOD: (20,16) -> (20,20)

LIGHT: (9,15) -> (5,11)

RA: (2,18) -> (2,17)

NUT: (14,15) -> (12,15)

SETH: (17,5) -> (14,2)

NEPRI: (5,13) -> (5,17)

RENENUTET: (15,1) -> (7,1)

HARDENED: (10,5) -> (3,12)

HOOF: (13,9) -> (16,9)

EGYPT: (13,4) -> (9,8)

WARNING: (16,16) -> (10,16)

Suggested bibliography for going deeper

- John D. Currid, Ancient Egypt and the Old Testament.
- Umberto Cassuto, A Commentary on the Book of Exodus.
- Nahum M. Sarna, Exodus (JPS Torah Commentary).
- Brevard S. Childs, The Book of Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary.
- T. Desmond Alexander, Exodus (Apollos Old Testament Commentary).
- James K. Hoffmeier, Israel in Egypt and Ancient Israel in Sinai.
- K. A. Kitchen, On the Reliability of the Old Testament.
- Richard Bauckham, The Theology of the Book of Revelation, for Exodus plague echoes in Revelation.

FINAL THOUGHT

Closing encouragement

The ninth plague says Egypt can lose the sun and God can still keep light for His people. Part Ten invites us to trust the God who can preserve light in the middle of not-yet-liberated spaces. The Passover night is coming. The Lamb is coming. The darkness does not get the last word.