Reading Comprehension Questions - *Exodus*, chapters 5-9

These questions are not intended as a study guide, but as a way to focus your attention on some salient points of the story. You should also make notes about your own observations and questions.

**Chapter 5:**

1. Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh and ask him only to allow the Israelites to leave Egypt for three days. What is the purpose of a three-day leave?

To make sacrifices to the Lord

2. Not only does Pharaoh refuse the request of Moses and Aaron, but as a result he decides to increase the work of the Hebrew slaves. What does he do to make life harder for them?

The taskmasters will no longer provide the straw for them to make bricks, they must find it themselves.

3. What do the officers of the children of Israel think of Moses and Aaron because of this?

They've made life worse.

**Chapter 6:**

You can skim or skip this chapter. The beginning of the chapter is a reminder of the covenant between God and the descendants of Abraham. Do you remember what God promises to them in this covenant?

**Chapter 7:**

1. God sends Moses and Aaron once more to Pharaoh. As part of his instructions to them he says, "I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt." How does God say that Pharaoh will react to these miracles? What does "hearken" mean?

Pharaoh will not listen.

2. How old are Moses and Aaron (verse 7)?

80 and 83

3. Aaron casts down his rod, or staff, before Pharaoh, and it turns into a serpent. The Egyptian magicians can do the same thing. How does Aaron's serpent show the superiority of the Hebrew God?

Aaron's snake eats the other snakes

4. After Pharaoh is unimpressed by the rod-into-serpent sign, God tells Moses to do something more dramatic, the first of ten "plagues" that will be visited on the Egyptians. What is the first plague?

He turns the river into blood

4. How does Pharaoh respond to this miracle? Why?

His heart was hardened. Because God has made him so.

**Chapter 8:**

1. What is the second plague? Can the Egyptian magicians match it?

Frogs. Yes

2. This time Pharaoh asks Moses and Aaron to "intreat [an old spelling of "entreat'] the Lord" to take away the frogs, and he will allow the people to go and sacrifice. The Lord does so; then what does Pharaoh do?

He doesn't let them go

3. The third plague begins with the command of God to Aaron to "stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land...." What will happen when Aaron does this?

The sand will turn to lice.

4. This time the Egyptian magicians cannot match what Aaron has done. What do they tell Pharaoh?

God is more powerful

5. Pharaoh won't listen; what's the next nasty thing to come his way (the fourth plague)?

Swarms of flies

6. In order to end this plague, Pharaoh tells Moses and Aaron to sacrifice to their God "in the land," by which he means Egypt. Moses' original request was that the Israelites should make a three days' journey in the desert. Moses insists on the three-day trip. Do you understand the excuse that Moses makes for the necessity of going out of Egypt to sacrifice?

The egyptians will attack the hebrews for sacrificing in Egypt

7. Pharaoh agrees to Moses' request, but asks him not to go very far. God removes the flies; then what does Pharaoh do?

Pharaoh will not let the Hebrew's go

**Chapter 9:**

1. The fifth plague is a "murrain" (a plague or disease) that will kill livestock; what distinction will God make in inflicting this pestilence?

Cows owned by Hebrews will not be killed

2. It goes without saying that the murrain doesn't change Pharaoh's mind. For the sixth plague, God tells Moses and Aaron to "take to you handfuls of ashes of the furnace...." When Moses sprinkles the ashes in the air before Pharaoh, what will be the result (the sixth plague -- what's a boil? What are blains)?

Terrible skin conditions, too gross to look up

3. God has another message for Pharaoh through Moses, containing a warning to the Egyptians, and even offering them a chance to save themselves from this seventh plague. What does God say that he will do "tomorrow about this time" (verse 18)?

a tremendous hailstorm

4. How is Pharaoh's reaction different -- at least temporarily -- to this plague (verse 27)?

The hebrews are righteous, the Egyptians are wicked