

Review the last stories a bit, focusing more on the most recent story, Moses.

- What patterns do you notice about God in these stories?
- What did God tell Jacob in the story?
- How has God continued to keep his promises through the story of Joseph?
- What did God call himself in the story of Moses and what does that tell us about him?

Tell the Story *(Don't just read it—know it and bring it to life!)*

Our last story told us a little about Moses and his life. Now he goes on to talk with Pharaoh, Egypt's leader. You'll never guess what happens next . . .

Moses and his brother Aaron met with Pharaoh and pleaded with him, "Let the Israelites leave Egypt for just three days to worship God. If you choose not to do this, God would punish the Egyptians severely."

But Pharaoh was stubborn and would not listen. He said, "Who is this God that I should listen to him? I don't know your God, and I am not letting you leave. You are just trying to create a distraction. Now, get back to work!"

After their meeting with Pharaoh things got worse for the Israelites. Pharaoh forced them to work faster and longer hours. Cruel slave masters pushed them to work harder and harder as they made bricks from mud and straw and worked in the fields.

So God sent a series of horrible plagues on the Egyptians and their land. But these plagues did not have any effect on the Israelites. The first plague turned the Nile River into blood. All of the fish died and the water smelled terrible and was undrinkable.

The second plague brought a mob of frogs that covered the entire country. These frogs were everywhere—in their bedrooms, kitchens and even in their pots and pans!

The third and fourth plagues brought gnats and flies. They covered all of the people and animals. Pharaoh's magicians tried to copy each of these plagues, but couldn't create gnats. They cried to Pharaoh, "God must be doing this to us!"

After each of these plagues Moses returned to Pharaoh and asked him to let the Israelites go so they could worship God. But Pharaoh was stubborn and would not listen.

The fifth plague brought severe disease to Egypt's livestock, but none of the Israelites' cattle became sick!

The sixth plague caused the Egyptians to break out with horrible sores all over their bodies—so bad they couldn't sit or lay down!

As each of the plagues hit, Pharaoh would say, "Enough! If you stop the plagues, I will let you leave..." But after God stopped the plagues, Pharaoh still would not let them go. God had made Pharaoh even more stubborn, and he refused to listen.

The seventh and eighth plagues brought hail and locusts that destroyed every tree and plant in the land. The locusts swept down and ate everything that wasn't wiped out by the hail.

The ninth plague brought complete darkness over the land for three days. No one could see anything except for the Israelites who still had light in their homes.

Despite all of these horrific events, Pharaoh still would not let the Israelites leave! God told Moses, "Pharaoh's stubbornness will give me the opportunity to do even greater miracles in Egypt."

So God would send one final plague...

Moses warned Pharaoh about this final plague saying, "This is what God says: 'About midnight I will pass through Egypt. Every firstborn son will die—rich or poor—from Pharaoh's son on down. And the Egyptians will weep loudly—but the Israelites will not be touched. Then you will beg the people of Israel to leave.'"

Moses left his meeting with Pharaoh burning with anger. In spite of this warning, Pharaoh still refused to let them go.

Then Moses and Aaron gave the Israelites instructions from God on how they could be saved from this plague. They told the people, "Each family is to select a sacrifice—a year-old male lamb or goat that is pure and without any defects (problems), and be careful not to break any of its bones. Then, take the blood from this sacrifice and put it on the doorframes of your home. This will be a sign for God to pass over your home and spare your firstborn."

So the people of Israel did exactly what God told them to do. At midnight God came through Egypt and took the life of every firstborn son, but he passed over the homes that had blood on their doorframes.

All of Egypt woke during the night because of the loud weeping. Someone had died in nearly every Egyptian home including Pharaoh's own son. The Egyptians begged the Israelites to leave right away.

That night the Israelites, now numbering over two million, set out to return to their Promised Land of Canaan. God guided them through the wilderness with a pillar made of clouds during the day and a pillar of fire at night.

Meanwhile, Pharaoh changed his mind again and sent his armies after the Israelites to catch them. As Pharaoh and his army approached, the people of Israel saw them in the distance and began to panic. They turned against Moses complaining, "Our slavery back in Egypt was better than dying out here in the wilderness!"

But Moses told the people, "Don't be afraid—God will rescue you today—he will fight for you!"

Then God told Moses to stretch out his hand over the sea. As he did this, God brought a huge wind that opened up a dry path for them to walk across! Pharaoh and his armies began to follow behind the Israelites. God told Moses to stretch out his hand again. This brought another huge wind that blew the sea back over Pharaoh and his armies, completely destroying them!

The people of Israel were in awe of God's amazing power. They put their trust in God and also in his servant Moses. They sang songs, danced, and celebrated how God had saved them!

Retell the Story

This may seem redundant, but it helps you remember and own the story. You will want to help them retell the story by giving them leading questions like: *So, where did the story begin? What were some of the problems God's people, the Israelites, had? How did they finally get out of Egypt?*

Dialogue

These questions are a good start to draw out observations about the story.

- **Why is this story called “The Passover”?**
- **Can you remember God’s promise to Abraham? What parts of God’s promise to Abraham do we see beginning to be fulfilled?**
- **How many descendants did Abraham have in just a couple of generations?**
- **How did God treat the Israelites’ enemies?**
- **Why do you think God would harden Pharaoh’s heart? What did Pharaoh’s stubbornness allow God to do?**
- **Where is water mentioned in this story? How is this significant?**
- **Where have we seen water mentioned in previous stories?**
- **What did God specifically say about the animal they were to sacrifice? Why did it need to be pure?**
- **Why do you think God required blood to be put on the Israelites door posts in order to be saved? What does blood represent, what does it mean?**
- **How might you have felt that Passover night as a Hebrew? Would you have doubted that God would save you in this situation?**
- **What does this story teach us about God?**
 - » He keeps his promises (covenant, warnings to Pharaoh).
 - » He is able to deliver and protect all who cry out to him.
 - » He is powerful.
 - » He cares for people.
 - » He is the source of grace
 - » He wants to use people to represent him.
 - » He allows suffering.
 - » His ways are sometimes hard for us to understand at first (He warned Pharaoh.).
 - » He punishes injustice and wrong.

Application (Optional questions that also work well in smaller groups)

- What questions do you have about the story?
- What will you remember most about this story?
- How does this story make a difference in your life?
- What questions do you have from the story?
- When is a time in your life you refused to listen to someone’s good advice?
- Have you ever celebrated a Seder Dinner or Passover Celebration? What was it like?

Scripture Memory Verses

I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. Exodus 6:7

And when your children ask you, “What does this ceremony mean to you?” then tell them, “It is the Passover sacrifice to the LORD, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when he struck down the Egyptians.” Exodus 12:26-27