



LIBERATION

A narrative about the miraculous lengths God goes through to redeem and restore His people.

THE BIBLE

Exodus 5-15

Prepare for the Story

ICEBREAKER

- Every one of us has had one of those “stubborn” moments. Share about a time when your spouse, child, or close friend was being unreasonably stubborn. How did you deal with this situation?

Rewind the Story

Can someone highlight what has happened in the story so far ...

- Jacob & Esau – Sibling rivalry
- Joseph – Dreams and Deliverance
- Moses – God rescues and redeems

Hear the Story

Scene One: Reasoning with Pharaoh

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 will 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 harder and harder as they worked in the fields and made bricks from mud and straw. 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.

Scene Two: The Plagues

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 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 when they tried to re-create the gnats, they were unsuccessful. 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 – it was so bad they couldn't sit or lay down!

Finally, Pharaoh said, *"Enough! If you stop the plagues, I will let you leave..."* But after God stopped the plagues, Pharaoh still would not let them go. And so God turned Pharaoh's hard heart against Himself because 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 chose to send one final plague ...

Scene Three: Passover

Moses warned Pharaoh about this final plague saying, *"This is what God says to you: 'Around 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.'*"

As Moses left, Pharaoh burned with anger. In spite of this warning, Pharaoh still refused to let the people go.

Then Moses gave the Israelites instructions from God on how they could be saved from this plague. He told the people, *"Each family is to select and sacrifice a year-old male lamb that is pure and without any defects 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 the 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 because they were afraid of everyone else dying. They even gave the Israelites whatever they asked for, so God's people left with plenty of gifts and treasures, just as God had said.

Scene Four: Exodus

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 of clouds during the day and a pillar of fire at night. Meanwhile, Pharaoh regretted letting the Israelites go and losing all of his laborers, so he decided to pursue them. Using the full force of his military, he gathered his army- chariots, horses, horsemen, and troops – and set out to capture them and bring them back as slaves to Egypt.

When the people of Israel arrived at the bank of the Red Sea, they saw Pharaoh and his army approaching from a distance and began to panic. They complained and turned against Moses, saying, *“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 army began to follow behind them. With the Israelites safely on the other shore and Pharaoh’s army on the dry path, God instructed Moses to stretch out his hand again. When he did this, the sea swept back over the Egyptian army, completely destroying them.

The people of Israel were in awe of God’s amazing power. And God said to them, *“If you listen carefully to me, paying attention and obeying my commands, I promise I will not bring on you any of the plagues I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you!”* So, 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

- What did Moses & Aaron ask Pharaoh for? What was his response?
- What happened to try and change Pharaoh’s mind?
- What plagues did the Egyptians suffer?
- What final plague did God promise?
- What instructions were the Israelites given to avoid this plague?
- What happened after Pharaoh let them go?
- What happened at the Red Sea?

- What did God promise? How did the people respond?

Discuss the Story

- What is your first reaction to this story? How did this story make you feel?
- What stood out to you from this story? What did you notice for the first time?
- What from this story made you wonder?
- Why do you think God would harden Pharaoh's heart?
- Where is water mentioned in this story? How is it significant? Where have we seen water mentioned in previous stories?
- Why do you think God said to make sure the sacrifices were pure animals?
- Why do you think God required blood to be put on the Israelite doorposts in order to be saved? What does blood represent?
- Did you hear anything that reminded you of *other* stories?

- From this story, what did you notice about humans?
- From this story, what do you notice about God's character or His qualities?

Join the Story

1) WHO IS GOD?

Use the QR code to the right to find an infographic that gives more details about the 10 Plagues and their connections to Egyptian gods and goddesses. What message do you think God was sending with these specific plagues? Do you see any connections to his response to when Moses asked a similar question (Exodus 3:13-14)? What do you think, God would say to us if we asked who He is?



2) BLOOD ON THE DOORPOSTS OF THE UNIVERSE

In our story, God heard the cries of His people and decided to do something about it. The Israelites are instructed to sacrifice a lamb, share a meal with it, and then use the blood of the lamb to paint the doorposts. All of this is done so that they can be "Passed-over" in the final plague. This event marks their deliverance from Egypt. What connections do you see from this story and another famous meal (Matthew 26:26-29), and what follows? What are the implications of this sacrificial meal for us and the world?

3) OLD LIFE GONE- NEW LIFE HAS COME

After the Israelites are freed from their slavery in Egypt, Pharaoh changes his mind and decides to get his slaves back. What do you think this part of the story illustrates about our transition between an old life without Christ and a new life with Him (2 Corinthians 5:17)? Do you think Christians who have been delivered from slavery to sin have to face past “enemies”? What do you think we need to be rescued from these past “enemies”? Give some examples.

Pray

God,

You have never left us alone. Even in the times we have felt that you were distant or removed, You hear our cries. We know that you are more interested in our character than our comfort and that You use everything to develop godly character in our lives. Help me to remember your faithfulness, Your provision, Your patience, and Your great acts of deliverance. Apart for You, we have nothing.