

Passover Story + Discussion questions

Adapted from Soma's "Story of God"

TELL THE STORY (*Don't just read it—know it and bring it to life!*)

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.

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!

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."*

Passover Story + Discussion questions

Adapted from Soma's "Story of God"

So God would send one final plague...

Moses warned Pharaoh about this final plague saying, *"This is what God says to you: '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.'"* As Moses left his meeting with Pharaoh, he burned with anger. In spite of this warning, Pharaoh still refused to let them 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 a 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 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 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. When the people of Israel arrived at the bank of a wide sea, they saw Pharaoh and his armies approaching from a 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!

Passover Story + Discussion questions

Adapted from Soma's "Story of God"

RETELL THE STORY Have someone in group retell the story in their own words. (*This may seem redundant, but it is very effective in helping the listeners own the story*)

DIALOGUE (No need to ask all of these questions...these are just conversation starters)

- Why is this story called "The Passover"?
- What parts of God's promise to Abraham do we see beginning to be fulfilled?
- Why do you think God would harden Pharaoh's heart?
- What did Pharaoh's stubbornness allow God to display?
- What did God specifically say about the animals they were to sacrifice?
- Why did it need to be pure?
- Why do you think God required blood to be put on the Israelites doorposts in order to be saved? What does blood represent?
- 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 warned Pharaoh).

He punishes injustice.

Etc

APPLICATION

- How did the story challenge or encourage you?
- In light of what you just learned about God, how should you respond?
- How can we as your community help you respond the way God has called you to respond?
- Pray