

HOW GOD SAVED HIS PEOPLE

UNIT ONE: God Rescued His People

Lesson 4:**Pharaoh Wouldn't Listen****CONTENT:**

1. Moses was afraid to go and talk to Pharaoh; and he thought that the Israelites would not believe him. God gave him a sign to show that he had sent him: his stick which turned into a snake. He told him to take his brother Aaron to speak for him.
2. Moses obeyed God. He and Aaron went to Egypt and told Pharaoh to let God's people go; but Pharaoh refused to listen. Each time Moses warned Pharaoh what would happen if he did not obey, but each time he refused, and the Egyptians had to suffer.
3. There were 10 plagues: the river became blood, frogs, gnats, flies, animals got sick, boils, hailstones, locusts, darkness, the firstborn died.
4. Jesus told the story of the two men who built their homes. He concluded: the wise man is like those who hear the word of God and obey. They are happy in the end. The foolish man is like those who hear, but do not obey. They land in trouble.
- 😊 5. Like Moses, we must try to obey the voice of God as he speaks to us.

ASSIGNMENT: Read handout at home. Learn the Bible verse.

REFERENCES: Exodus Ch 4-10; Matthew 7:24-27; James1:22. CCC 1696, 1970.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Handouts.

I. STARTER:

- Do you know how to play 'I Spy'? Today we'll play 'I Hear'. First close your eyes and try to listen to all the sounds around us.

[Children play 'I Hear': The leader starts, "I hear with my little ear, something beginning with (E.g.) M." Others try to guess. Whoever guesses right (MUSIC) gets a chance to lead. They might hear TRAFFIC, CROWS, CHILDREN, FANS etc.]

- Did you realise that there were so many sounds around? We could hear them, but we were not really thinking of them, or listening to them. Sometimes we can hear Mummy calling us home from play, but we don't want to hear, so we just ignore her.
- Today we are going to talk about someone who heard, but didn't want to listen or obey. Because of this a lot of bad things happened.

II. DEVELOPMENT:

- Last time we heard how God spoke to Moses from the burning bush. God gave Moses a name for himself: I AM WHO I AM. What was God planning to do? *[He was planning to set the Israelites free and take them out of Egypt.]*

STORY: Pharaoh Wouldn't Listen

When Moses heard what God wanted him to do, he was afraid. He was afraid of 3 things: one, that the Israelites would not believe him; two that Pharaoh would not listen to him; and three, that he would not be able to talk properly. (He was a shy man and not good at talking.)

God told him, "Throw your stick down!" Moses obeyed. As soon as the stick touched the ground, it became a snake! God said, "Now pick it up by its tail!" This was a more difficult thing to do! Moses put out his hand and grabbed the snake's tail. It stopped wriggling, became hard.. It was a stick again!

God said, “Do this sign so that people will believe that I have sent you. And if you’re worried about talking, take your brother Aaron to do the talking for you. (Aaron was a great talker!) Now go! And do what I say! Don’t worry; those who wanted to kill you in Egypt are dead.”

So Moses went. As he was going, his brother Aaron came to meet him. The two of them travelled to Egypt and went to Pharaoh’s palace. They said to him, “The Lord, the God of Israel says, ‘Let my people go!’”

But Pharaoh answered, “Who is this Lord that I should listen to him? I don’t know him. I will not let the Israelites go. They have work to do.”

Then Pharaoh ordered, “Give the Israelite slaves more work to do. They are getting lazy. And if they don’t finish, beat them!”

God said to Moses, “Don’t worry! I will show Pharaoh who I am! When he goes to the river tomorrow morning, go and meet him there and touch the water with your stick.”

So the next morning, Moses and Aaron went to the river and met Pharaoh. Aaron touched the water with the stick. Suddenly a pool of red came out of the stick... it spread out till the whole river was dark red. It began to smell and dead fish started floating on the water.

“The river has turned to blood!” the people cried out. “What will we drink?” But Pharaoh took no notice. He just turned and went back to his house.

After one week, God said, “Go back and warn Pharaoh again. So Moses went and said, “The Lord says, ‘Let my people go!’ If you refuse, the whole country will be filled with frogs!”

But Pharaoh wouldn’t listen. Aaron stretched the stick over the river again and frogs started jumping out of the water... hundreds and thousands of green, slimy frogs. They hopped into the houses, into the food, onto the beds and onto the people... even on Pharaoh and his family.

Pharaoh sent for Moses. “These frogs are driving me mad!” he said. “Pray to your God to take them away, and then I’ll let the people go.”

So Moses prayed, and the frogs died. The people gathered the dead frogs into great stinking piles. But as soon as the problem was over, Pharaoh changed his mind. “Sorry, you can’t go anywhere. Stay here and work for me!” he said.

It went on like this for many weeks. Each time Moses warned Pharaoh that some trouble would come. (Big troubles are called plagues) [Write PLAGUES on the blackboard.] But each time Pharaoh refused to listen. Then when it happened, he would say, “Okay, okay, I’ll let you go!” But afterwards he would go back on his promise. And so the Egyptians had to face many plagues. Let’s write them down as we hear about them.

[Give out handouts and let children fill in the names of the plagues as the story proceeds:]

THE RIVER BECAME BLOOD, FROGS, GNATS, FLIES, ANIMALS GOT SICK, BOILS, HAILSTONES, LOCUSTS, DARKNESS, THE FIRSTBORN DIED.

After the frogs, there was a plague of tiny insects called gnats. (*pronounced ‘NATS’*) They made the people itch and scratch. [Children write GNATS.]

Then there were flies, great swarms of them, sitting on everything. After that the animals got sick and started to die. Only the animals of the Israelites were okay... nothing happened to them.

Next, Moses threw some dust into the air. The wind spread it around and all the Egyptians got boils over their bodies. (Boils are lumps which come up on our skin. They are itchy and hurt.) But Pharaoh wouldn’t give in.

Then Moses told Pharaoh, “The Lord says, ‘Let my people go. Stop thinking you are greater than me. I am going to send hail, like stones from the sky. Whoever is outdoors will die.’”

Some of the Egyptians believed Moses’ words. They brought their animals into their sheds and their families into their houses. Moses lifted his hand to the sky and there was loud thunder. The sky became dark and huge hailstones began to fall! (Hail is small bits of ice which fall from the sky.) These hailstones were like rocks. They killed the animals and people who were not under a roof.

The next plague was locusts. Locusts are like big grass-hoppers. They came flying like a big black cloud and began to eat up all the plants, all the fruit trees, the rice, vegetables, everything green was eaten up.

Pharaoh's officers said, "Why don't you let these people go? We have suffered enough!" But Pharaoh did the same as before: first he said yes and then he said no.

The ninth plague was darkness. For three days it was so dark that no one could move out of their houses. Everyone was afraid, and they realised that the God of the Israelites was a powerful God. Everyone except... [?] Pharaoh!

At last God said to Moses, "I will bring one more plague on Egypt and then Pharaoh will let my people go. In every home, the first-born (that means the eldest) will die. Only then Pharaoh will give in."

We will hear about the last plague later. Now let us sit quietly for a little while and close our eyes. Think about the Lord, the God of the Israelites. How great and powerful he is. Think about the Israelite slaves. They must have been waiting to see if their God would win and if they would escape from Egypt.

NEXT CLASS:

- Do you remember the true story we heard last time, about Pharaoh and the 10 plagues? Let's see if you can tell the story with actions.

[A volunteer could tell the story using their handouts while the rest of the class silently mimes the plagues using their creativity. E.g. water turned to blood (Tasting water and spitting it out.), frogs (pushing and shooing them off.); gnats (scratching their bodies). If you wish you could have Moses, Aaron and Pharaoh acting in front of the class.]

- In this story two people heard God telling them to do something. One listened and obeyed, but the other didn't. Who listened to God? *[Moses]* And who refused to listen? *[Pharaoh]*
- Jesus told us something about hearing and obeying. He told a story to help us understand.

Once there were 2 men who wanted to build houses for themselves. (We don't know their names, so we'll call them Ram and Aaram.) As they walked along, searching for a good place they reached a river.

Aaram looked at the sand next to the river and said, "Aha! This is the place for me! This sand is nice and soft and easy to dig. Come Ram, let's build here!"

But Ram looked at the sand and shook his head. "Yes it's easy to dig, but it's also easy to wash away. What will happen when the rains come?" He looked up to a hill nearby. "I think I'll climb up and build on that hill."

"Arrey paagal! That hill is hard and rocky. You'll break your back digging that rock!"

But Ram just took his tools and went up the hill. Both men began to dig. (Have you seen a building being built? First they dig a deep pit and start the wall of the building from down. That is so that the building is firm, and doesn't fall down.)

Aaram finished digging in one morning and then started putting up the walls, then the roof. In one week his house was ready! He went for a walk to see how his friend was getting on. Ram was still digging!

"Oh foolish Ram! You are breaking your back for nothing! Come and see my lovely house. It's ready! And you have not put up a single brick!"

But Ram answered, "This is the best way! Wait and see!"

After one month, Ram's house was ready too. He had just finished and shut the door, when he heard thunder. The sky became black, the wind blew and the rain came pouring down.

“Thank God I’m safe in my house!” Ram said.

The rain went on for days without stopping. Ram looked out of the window and saw water flowing past. It was the river! The rain water had filled the river and it had come up and up. Ram saw rocks and trees rushing past in the water.

“Oh I hope my friend Aaram is okay!” But there was nothing he could do to help. He couldn’t even get out of his house. When the rain finally stopped and the flood waters went down, Ram came out of his house and looked down to the river bank. There was no sign of Aaram. He was gone!... And so was his house!

When Jesus had finished telling the story he said, ‘All those who hear my words and do what I tell them are like the wise man who built his house on the rock. But those who hear my words and don’t obey are like the foolish man who built on sand. When the wind and rain came, the house fell down and that was the end of it!’

[Read the rest of the handout. Children draw the story of the builders on the reverse of the handout.]

III. REFLECTION & PRAYER:

- Close your eyes and think now: Do you want to be like Ram and like Moses? Are you ready to do what God asks you to do, even if it is difficult?... Or are you going to be like Aaram, and like Pharaoh? Are you going to hear and say no to God? Think about it and quietly talk to God about it.

[Teach the song ‘The Wise man built’ with actions.]

The wise man built his house upon the rock [3] and the rain came tumbling down.

The rain came down, and the flood came up [3] and the house upon the rock stood firm.

The foolish man built his house upon the sand [3] and the rain came tumbling down.

The rain came down, and the flood came up [3] and the house upon the sand went... (CLAP!)

So build your life on the word of the Lord [3] And your life will never go down (CLAP!)

Home assignment: Read the handout at home. Learn the Bible verse.
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