

God Saves His People

Objective: Students will be able to summarize the story of the Exodus and identify it as the God-led deliverance of the Hebrews from Egypt.

For the Catechist

For us the Old Testament is understood as a preparation for Christ. It is a whole series of promises which in Christ are fulfilled in abundance. We receive this message in the Church through the preaching of the apostles. The lessons in this unit address the high points of the Old Testament—the Exodus, God's Covenant with the Israelites and the giving of the Law—as they were preached in the early Christian Church. For these lessons the students are asked to read from their New Testament and learn about the Old Testament lessons as told in the Acts of the Apostles.

The story of the Exodus is included as a lesson in every book since Grade 1 in the *God With Us* series. Each year the students learn how God chose a people, gave them a leader and made a covenant with them. This year the students will read the Scriptures that show this interaction between God and His people. Three lessons of this Grade 4 book, *God's Promise Is Fulfilled*, are devoted to the Exodus story for two reasons:

- 1) the exodus is the fulfillment of God's promise to Moses, "I will be with you" (Ex 3:12) and
- 2) Stephen interprets Christ as the fulfillment of God's promise as told by Moses "And the Lord said to me, 'This was well said. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their kinsmen, and will put my words into his mouth; he shall tell them all that I command him'" (Dt 18:17-18).

In the previous lesson the students read from the Acts of the Apostles as their reference for the story of Moses. This lesson does the same but also includes an Old Testament reading. Since many children might have seen a film about the Exodus or the Ten Commandments, encourage them to add what they remember.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: Our Father

Introduction: Discussion of people being rescued from a fire, accident or flood

Need: pictures of a fire accident or flood

Read Text Aloud: Have the students volunteer to read the text aloud or have the students read sections silently.

Activity Tracks:

Choose a basic, group, or craft activity (detailed on the pages that follow) to reinforce the lesson.

- *Basic:* The Exodus
- *Group:* Our Newspaper
Part 2- The Exodus Story
- *Craft:* God Saves His People
Part 1

Closing: Exodus 15:1-2

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord:
The Three Patriarchs:
Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

Teaching Pics

Ten plagues. A description of the ten plagues is not included in any lessons. The Book of Exodus 7-11 lists and describes them as the following: water turned into blood, the frogs, the gnats, the flies, the pestilence, the boils, the hail, the locusts, the darkness, and the death of the first-born. Rather than emphasize these extraordinary signs of God's will, this lesson emphasizes the greater meaning of these events: God's love and care for His people.

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

God Remains Faithful to All People

"The exodus is the model for all of God's relationships to His people. In it we encounter God who takes the initiative in loving us and calling us to His friendship. As the Lord passed before him, Moses was moved to cry out, "The Lord, the Lord, a merciful and gracious God, slow to anger and rich in kindness and fidelity, continuing in his kindness for a thousand generations, and forgiving wickedness and crime and sin" (Ex 34:6-7). In later years the prophets would never forget how God deals with the human race: He remains faithful even though His people sin" (*LLI* 33).

The Israelites: Representative of All

"The number of Israelites who actually left Egypt were few, but they became representative of all who would follow. Through their Passover sharing of faith, later generations have had the promise to participate in the grace conferred upon those few" (*LLI* 36).

God's Powerful Arm

"The content and meaning of God's name, 'I will be there as who I am,' became apparent soon after the vision of the burning bush at Sinai/Horeb. God revealed Himself to Moses as someone about to intervene personally and powerfully on behalf of His people. God, 'being itself,' is an active being, a powerful being, and He quickly shared His activity and power with Moses. By empowering Moses to work signs - changing a staff into a snake, making his hand leprous and then whole again, changing Nile River water into blood - God began to reveal to Pharaoh, to Egypt and to His own people the extent of His power and His plans (Exodus 4:1-9).

"Consequently, God revealed who He is and taught Pharaoh the price of his arrogance in a series of increasingly dramatic interventions which Exodus describes as 'signs,' 'plagues' and the works of God's 'strong hand and powerful arm.' By these deeds both the Israelites and the Egyptians would come to know who God is....

"The ten plagues which God sent to punish Pharaoh's stubbornness all distinguish between the Hebrews, who are coming to know the Lord and who remain unharmed, and the Egyptians, who refuse to acknowledge the Lord and therefore suffer. By these ten painful lessons, Pharaoh came to learn who God is: He is the Lord (7:17; 8:23); there is no one else like Him (9:14); the earth belongs to Him (9:29). The culmination of God's mighty deeds of judgment against Egypt, the tenth and final plague, involved the death of every Egyptian firstborn male, of man and beast alike (11:4-7, 12:29-32). With this catastrophe, Pharaoh and all Egypt finally agreed to let the Hebrews go ostensibly to 'serve the Lord' at some ritual in the wilderness. Here begins the heart of the Passover event" (*OTB* 59-60).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Let's pray the Lord's Prayer today.

Introduction

Last week we learned about the Hebrews. In what country were they held as slaves? (Egypt) Did they like being slaves? Why not? Would you want to be a slave? [Let the children share.] They called out to God for help. Who did God call to help the Hebrews? (Moses) Do you think God needs us to help each other just as He needed Moses to help the Hebrews?

Let's look at some pictures I brought in today. I cut these pictures out of the newspaper. [Hold up pictures of an accident, fire, or some other event that requires someone's help.] Did any of you ever see an accident? Who are some of the people who help at accidents? (Police officers, firefighters, EMTs) How do they know they have to go to help? (Pagers, sirens, and phone calls tell them.) Do any of you have family members who work in any of these jobs? [Let the children share.] Helping people is very important. God wants us to help whenever we can.

Now let's turn to our lesson to learn how God told Moses to help the Hebrews.

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God Saves His People



The Hebrew people were living in slavery in Egypt, and they were being treated very badly. They called out to God to help them. We read what happened in the Old Testament Book of Exodus. God answered their cry and chose Moses to be their leader. God told Moses to go to Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt: "You shall tell him all that I command you. In turn, your brother Aaron shall tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave his land" (Exodus 7:2).

Moses went to Egypt to talk to Pharaoh. Moses asked for the Hebrew slaves to be set free. "Pharaoh, however, was obstinate and would not listen to them" (Exodus 7:13).

God, therefore, sent many plagues upon the Egyptians as signs that He wanted Pharaoh to let the people go. Each plague caused problems for Pharaoh and the people, but Pharaoh would not release the slaves. After the tenth plague, Pharaoh finally listened to Moses, and the Hebrew slaves were freed and allowed to leave Egypt.

God told Moses to call the people together. They left quickly, taking whatever they could carry. God sent the people signs to let them know He was with them as they traveled. During the day He guided them with a cloud. At night God guided them with a pillar of fire.

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Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

"Pharaoh, however, was obstinate and would not listen to them" (Exodus 7:13).

What does obstinate mean? (Stubborn)


In what book of the Old Testament is this story? (Exodus) In what chapter (7) and what verse (13) can we read that sentence?

At night God guided them with a pillar of fire.

What happened when Moses asked Pharaoh to release the slaves? (Pharaoh said "No ") What happened next in the story? (God sent ten plagues upon Egypt.) [For those of you who want to mention the ten plagues, they are listed in the "For the Catechist" section of this lesson.] Pharaoh finally agreed to free the slaves. How did God guide the Hebrews? (With a cloud during the day and a pillar of fire at night

After Moses and the Hebrews left Egypt, Pharaoh changed his mind. He sent his soldiers to bring the Hebrews back to Egypt. With his soldiers, Pharaoh chased after the people. They caught up with them at the Red Sea.

God again saved His people. He caused the sea to draw back and the waters parted to make a path. The Hebrews crossed over the dry sea bed. When the Egyptians were about to cross, God caused the waters to flow back, and the soldiers drowned.




"Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord swept the sea with a strong east wind throughout the night and so turned it into dry land. When the water was thus divided, the Israelites marched into the midst of the sea on dry land, with the water like a wall to their right and to their left.

"The Egyptians followed in pursuit; all Pharaoh's horses and chariots and chariotiers went after them right into the midst of the sea. . . .

"Then the Lord told Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may flow back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and their chariotiers. . . . As the water flowed back, it covered the chariots and the chariotiers of Pharaoh's whole army which had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not a single one of them escaped. . . .

"When Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the seashore and beheld the great power that the Lord had shown against the Egyptians, they feared the Lord and believed in Him and in His servant Moses." (Exodus 14:21-31)



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What happened when Pharaoh changed his mind? (He ran after the Hebrews.)

Describe what happened with the Red Sea.

(It had a path of dry land for the Hebrews to go through, but it drowned the Egyptians as they were going through.) How did the Hebrews react? (They feared God and believed in Him and in Moses.)

The Exodus is the greatest event of the Old Testament.

What is the Exodus? (The God-led deliverance of the Hebrews from Egypt.) From what are the Hebrews delivered? (Slavery, the Pharaoh) Who is leading them? (God) That is the reason we say "God-led deliverance. What does exodus mean? (The going-out, especially in a large group)

He would be the Savior of the whole world.

About what promise did Stephen remind the Sanhedrin? (God would send them another great leader.) About what promise did Jesus speak? (God promises to send another great leader.) Jesus identified the great leader. Who is He? (Jesus) Jesus is our Savior. From what did Jesus save us? (He saved us from eternal death and granted us eternal life.)

Words to Remember: [Read the words together, and use them to introduce, summarize, and/or review the lesson.]

These events that led to the freedom of the Hebrews is called the Exodus. The word exodus means the going-out, especially in a large group. In the Bible the Exodus is the God-led deliverance of the Hebrews from Egypt. In each event, we see how God is faithful to His promise to be with His people and to save them. The Exodus is the greatest event of the Old Testament.

The story of Moses, Pharaoh, and the Israelites happened over a thousand years before Jesus was born. It is the most important event in the Old Testament. Stephen told the story to the Sanhedrin even though they probably know it by heart. He wanted to remind them of one special thing. Read Acts 7:37 to find out what Stephen wanted them to know. On the following lines, write what Stephen said.

It was this Moses who said to the Israelites, "God will raise up for you, from among your own kinfolk, a prophet, like me."

Stephen wanted the Sanhedrin to remember that Moses had promised the Israelites that God would send them another great leader.

Jesus also had spoken about Moses' promise of a new leader. Jesus said that there were many things promised about this leader in the Law of Moses, in the writings of the prophets, and in the psalms. Then Jesus said that all these promises had been fulfilled in Him (Luke 24:44). He would be the Savior of the whole world.

Words to Remember
Pharaoh: The ruler of Egypt
Plague: A natural disaster or a sickness that affects many people.
The Exodus: The God-led deliverance of the Hebrews from Egypt.
Red Sea: The sea the Hebrews crossed as they left Egypt.

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Activity Tracks

Basic: The Exodus

[This worksheet is in the student text.]

Unscramble the words and write one sentence about each one. [Encourage the students to find the New Testament passage on their own so that they can complete the sentence at the bottom of the page.]

The Exodus

I. Unscramble the words below. Then write a sentence about each one.

- SEOMS - **MOSES**
An important leader who listened to God's call to lead His people to freedom.
- HPROAHA - **PHARAOH**
The ruler of Egypt who finally freed the Israelites.
- UDSXEO - **EXODUS**
The God-led deliverance of the Hebrews from Egypt.
- OMPRESI - **PROMISE**
A promise is an agreement. God promises to be with us always.
- DRE AES - **RED SEA**
The Red Sea allowed the Hebrews to leave Egypt.

II. Read Luke 24:44. Complete the following sentence that Jesus said to His disciples:

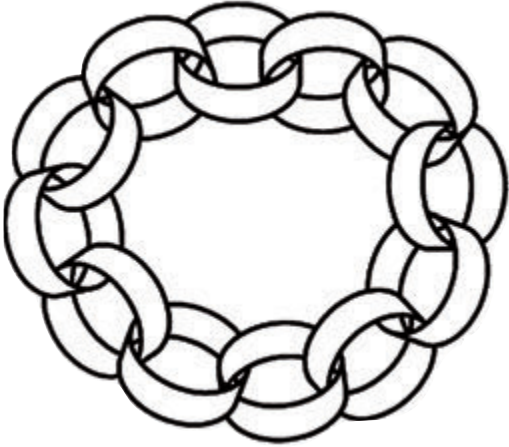
"He said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and in the prophets and psalms must be fulfilled."

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Group: Our Newspaper
Part 2 - The Exodus Story

Materials: Paper, pens, and markers

Today we learned more about the Hebrews and their freedom from slavery. Let's use the details from today's lesson to write more articles for our newspaper that we started last week.



Craft: God Saves His People

Materials: Poster board, scissors, 6" x 1/2" strips of construction paper, markers, stapler or glue, masking tape

[Have sample ready to show children.] *Today we learned that a chain of events took place that saved God's people from slavery. We are going to list the events on the strips of paper and connect the strips to form a chain. We will complete this chain after next week's lesson. Then we will hang the paper chain from our poster board that says, "God Saves His People."*

[You could have each student do a separate chain or have everyone work together to do a class chain.] *Let's make a list of the events before we start writing them on the paper.*

[You can review by writing your own list, or you can use the following list of events]:

The Hebrew people call out to God to save them.

God calls to Moses from the burning bush.

Moses says "Yes" to God and agrees to save the Israelites.

Moses asks the Pharaoh to free the Israelites.

The Pharaoh says "No."

God sent ten plagues upon the Egyptians before Pharaoh agreed.

Moses leads the people out of Egypt.

Pharaoh changes His mind.

The Israelites march through the path in the Red Sea.

The Red Sea drowns the Egyptian soldiers.

God makes a covenant with the Israelites.

God promises to make the Israelites His chosen people

The Israelites promise to follow God's Law.

"The Israelites promise to follow the Ten Commandments.

Closing: *Exodus 15:1-2 is our closing prayer. This prayer is part of a song that Moses and the Israelites sang to the Lord. [This song is found at the end of this lesson. If you are making the psalm booklet, you can add this song.]*

Pharaoh

Plague

The Exodus

Red Sea

A natural disaster or a sickness
that affects many people.

The Ruler of Egypt

The sea the Hebrews crossed
as they left Egypt.

The God-led deliverance of the
Hebrews from Egypt.

Moses and the Israelites Sing to the Lord

I will sing to the Lord, for he is gloriously triumphant;
horse and chariot he has cast into the sea.
My strength and my courage is the Lord,
and he has been my savior.
He is my God, I praise him;
the God of my father, I extol him.
(Exodus 15:1-2)

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