

Stubborn Pharaoh is eventually changed



Bible verses:

Exodus 7:1-5,8-13,20-21; 8:5-8,16-19,24;

9:1-9,15-19; 12:12-13

The plagues of Egypt



Aim:

To explore the many events leading to Passover



Today's fruit:

Patience



In today's session we read about a pretty gruesome part of the Israelites' story which involves boils, flies, locusts and frogs.

Moses continued to follow God's calling and challenged Pharaoh to release the Israelites. Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites go and the people of Egypt suffered as a result. We will also explore what it means to be patient as we wait for God to answer our prayers.

It had been a very long time, but Moses' patience eventually paid off and Pharaoh changed his mind to set the Israelites free.

Each child will need:

- Pens/pencils and paper
- Resources for the children to create their own jigsaw – see Action it
- An envelope to store their jigsaw pieces (optional)
- *Explore It ideas* handout

You will need:

- To provide a very simple jigsaw puzzle for each team – see Start it
- Today's fruit sign: *Patience*
- Memory verse poster (or reuse the poster from Session One)
- Paper and pen for a list
- To write a prayer on a large sheet of paper – see Pray it

Start it

One of the themes of today's session is patience, so we are going to start by giving the children a chance to show how patient they are. Divide the group into teams. Each team will need a simple jigsaw puzzle. Ask each team to sit in a circle and place the jigsaw pieces in the centre of the circle. The winning team is the first one to assemble the puzzle. They must obey the following rules:

1. Moving around the circle, they must take turns to complete the jigsaw puzzle.
2. Only one person can touch one jigsaw piece during a turn.
3. Once someone has put down a jigsaw piece, then it is the next person's turn.

Encourage the children to talk to each other about how they can work as a team to complete the task.

When the winning team has completed their jigsaw puzzle, discuss with the children what it was like to complete the puzzle this way. What did they find frustrating? Did they start to feel impatient? If so, what did that look like?

Say:

In our story today the Israelites had to wait patiently to secure their freedom from slavery in Egypt.

Sing it

Say:

In these sessions we always try to get us to think about God and what it means to follow him as a disciple of Jesus. It is God's 'plan' that we know him. This is his purpose, as our memory verse reminds us.

Say:

However, there may be twists and turns along the way, so don't panic about not knowing God's ideal plan. It's not about finding one way; instead it's about travelling with God, as it says in the chorus of this great song:

**'God has a plan for your life.
Unexpected turns can be just right.
Trust your journey with him, always!'**

Our song for today recaps the story of Moses and gives us a clue about what happened next.

Song

'Little Mo' (The Story of Moses) by DG Bible Songs (3:25)

Tell it

Say:

This month we have followed Moses' journey from a basket in the bullrushes, to a palace, to the wilderness and back to Egypt. Let's watch a clip that recaps the story and helps us to discover what happened next.

Video

Moses and the Exodus Stories of the Bible by Saddleback Kids (5:17)

Watch: 0:00-1:43 'This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, has said: "Let my people go."'

Say:

Moses had been given very specific instructions from God to return to Egypt and say to the Pharaoh, 'Let my people go.'

Ask:

What do you think the Pharaoh did?

Watch: 1:44-3:18 'Yet Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them. Just as God had said.'

Ask:

What happened the second time Moses asked the Pharaoh to 'Let my people go'?

Say:

God had had enough with Pharaoh. All the people of Egypt suffered because of the Pharaoh's stubbornness.

Give each child a piece of paper and ask them to write the numbers one to ten. As they watch the clip, ask them to write down the ten plagues God sent to the people of Egypt. You may want to watch this section through once and then go back to the beginning so that the children can write down each plague.

Watch 3:19-4:28 'Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and told them to be gone with the Israelites.'

The accompanying Scripture verses are listed below for you to discuss with the children. Before each plague was sent, God warned the Pharaoh what would happen if he didn't let the Israelites go. Every time, Pharaoh chose to ignore God and keep the Israelites captive.

This is a difficult section where *Explore it* invites children for their thoughts. Trust that a child's spirituality is the sense-making activity they undergo based upon experiences. The Bible writers were also trying to make sense of events in the world and how God was involved.

Please adapt the discussions around this topic with your group as some of the plagues are gruesome. It may be difficult for the children to understand how a loving God could let so many children and animals die. There are no neat answers to these issues and sometimes we need to grapple with the uncomfortable parts of the Bible and how its writers understood events.

1. **Blood**

‘So Moses and Aaron did just as the Lord had commanded. Aaron raised his staff and struck the water in the Nile River. He did this in front of the king and his officers. So all the water in the Nile changed into blood. The fish in the Nile died, and the river began to stink. So the Egyptians could not drink water from it. Blood was everywhere in the land of Egypt.’

(Exodus 7:20-21 *ICB*)

2. **Frogs**

‘Then the Lord said to Moses, “Tell Aaron to hold his staff in his hand over the rivers, canals and ponds. Make frogs come up out of the water on to the land of Egypt.”

‘Aaron held his hand over all the waters of Egypt. The frogs came up out of the water and covered the land of Egypt. The magicians used their tricks to do the same thing. So even more frogs came up on to the land of Egypt.

‘So the king called for Moses and Aaron. He said, “Pray to the Lord to take the frogs away from me and my people. I will let your people go to offer sacrifices to the Lord.”’

(Exodus 8:5-8 *ICB*)

3. **Gnats**

‘Then the Lord said to Moses, “Tell Aaron to raise his staff and strike the dust on the ground. Then everywhere in Egypt the dust will change into gnats.” They did this. Aaron raised the staff that was in his hand and struck the dust on the ground. Then everywhere in Egypt the dust changed into gnats. The gnats got on the people and animals. Using their tricks, the magicians tried to do the same thing. But they could not make the dust change into gnats. The gnats remained on the people and animals. So the magicians told the king that the power of God had done this. But the king was stubborn and refused to listen to them. This happened just as the Lord had said.’

(Exodus 8:16-19 *ICB*)

4. **Flies**

‘So the Lord did as he had said. Great swarms of flies came into the king’s palace and his officers’ houses. All over Egypt flies were ruining the land. The king called for Moses and Aaron. He told them, “Offer sacrifices to your God here in this country.”’

(Exodus 8:24-25 *ICB*)

5. Livestock

‘Then the Lord told Moses, “Go to the king of Egypt. Tell him, ‘This is what the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, says: Let my people go to worship me. You might refuse to let them go and continue to hold them. Then the Lord will punish you. He will send a terrible disease on all your farm animals. He will cause all of your horses, donkeys, camels, cattle and sheep to become sick. But the Lord will treat Israel’s animals differently from the animals of Egypt. None of the animals that belong to the Israelites will die. The Lord has set tomorrow as the time he will do this in the land.’” The next day the Lord did as he promised. All the farm animals in Egypt died. But none of the animals belonging to the Israelites died. The king sent people to see what had happened to the animals of Israel. They found that not one of them had died. But the king was still stubborn. He did not let the people go.’

(Exodus 9:1-7 *ICB*)

6. Boils

‘The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “Fill your hands with the ashes from a furnace. Moses, throw the ashes into the air in front of the king of Egypt. The ashes will spread like dust through all the land of Egypt. The dust will cause boils to break out and become sores on the skin. These sores will be on people and animals everywhere in the land.”’

(Exodus 9:8-9 *ICB*)

7. Hail

“By now I could have used my power and caused a bad disease. It would have destroyed you and your people from the earth. But I have let you live for this reason: to show you my power. In this way my name will be talked about in all the earth. You are still against my people. You do not want to let them go. So at this time tomorrow, I will send a terrible hailstorm. It will be the worst in Egypt since it became a nation. Now send for your animals and whatever you have in the fields. Bring them into a safe place. The hail will fall on every person or animal that is still in the fields. If they have not been brought in, they will die.”’

(Exodus 9:15-19 *ICB*)

8. Locusts

‘So Moses raised his staff over the land of Egypt. And the Lord caused a strong wind to blow from the east. It blew across the land all that day and night. When morning came, the east wind had brought the locusts. Swarms of locusts covered all the land of Egypt and settled everywhere. There were more locusts than ever before or after. The locusts covered the whole land so that it was black. They ate everything that was left after the hail. They ate every plant in the field and all the fruit on the trees. Nothing green was left on any tree or plant anywhere in Egypt.’

(Exodus 10:13-15 *ICB*)

9. Darkness

‘Then the Lord told Moses, “Raise your hand toward the sky, and darkness will cover the land of Egypt. It will be so dark you will be able to feel it.” So Moses raised his hand toward the sky. Then total darkness was everywhere in Egypt for three days. No one could see anyone else. And no one could go anywhere for three days. But the Israelites had light where they lived.’

(Exodus 10:21–23 *ICB*)

10. Firstborn

‘At midnight the Lord killed all the firstborn sons in the land of Egypt. The firstborn of the king, who sat on the throne, died. Even the firstborn of the prisoner in jail died. Also all the firstborn farm animals died. The king, his officers and all the Egyptians got up during the night. Someone had died in every house. So there was loud crying everywhere in Egypt.’

(Exodus 12:29–30 *ICB*)

Say:

The final straw for stubborn Pharaoh was the plague over Egypt where every firstborn child died. The Israelites were saved from this disaster by cooking lamb and painting their doorposts with lamb’s blood – a night which became known as Passover.

Watch: 4:29–end.

Say:

Pharaoh was repeatedly given the opportunity to do the right thing and let God’s people go, but he refused and continued to break the promises he had made. All the time, Moses had to remain patient. Eventually, God saved the people of Israel and they were freed from slavery.

Action it

So far, as we have looked at the story of the ten plagues, we have focused on the Pharaoh’s disobedience to God. Now, let’s think about what it would have been like for the Israelites.

Ask:

What happened each time Moses warned Pharaoh about the next plague?

Say:

Pharaoh kept promising to let the Israelites go and then he would change his mind. Each time, the Israelites raised their hopes and had them dashed. Each time, they had to remain patient and put their trust in God again and again.

Display the *Patience* sign.

Ask:

Do you find it difficult to be patient with other people? If so, how? What about God – is it difficult to be patient when you are waiting for him to answer your prayers?

Say:

Our memory verse reminds us that we can patiently trust God to work every situation for good. It may take time for all the pieces to fall into place, but we can patiently wait for God's plan to be fulfilled. Let's share our memory verse together.

Memory verse

'And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.'

(Romans 8:28 *NIV*)

Jigsaw puzzle

Explain that the children are going to create a jigsaw puzzle using this month's memory verse. Display Romans 8:28 for the children to copy and use one of the following methods to create the puzzle. Provide an envelope if children are taking these home.

When the children have completed their jigsaw puzzle, explain how we can patiently wait on God and trust him as each piece of his plan falls into place.

Suggested jigsaw resources

- Purchase blank jigsaw pieces from Amazon
- Print a template from templatelab.com



Pray it

Sit in a big circle as a group. Ask the children to share all the times at home and at school where they feel impatient. Write a list of all their ideas. Explain to the children that they will each have an opportunity to ask God for patience. Write the following sentence on a large sheet of paper for the children to see and ask them to think about how they would finish the prayer.

Dear God,

Help me to be patient when _____.

Amen.

When the children have had time to think, move around the circle giving each one of them a chance to share their prayer.

Explore it

Remember to send home the *Explore It ideas* for children and families.



Stubborn Pharaoh is eventually changed

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.



Bible verses:

Exodus 7:1-5,8-13,20-21; 8:5-8, 16-19,24; 9:1-9,15-19; 12:12-13
The plagues of Egypt



Aim:

To explore the many events leading to Passover



Today's fruit:

Patience



Discover

Watch the clip to find out more about patience, one of the fruit of the Spirit.

Fruit of the Spirit: Patience (God's Story)
by Crossroads Kids' Club

How could you practise patience this week?



Watch

Now that you have discovered more about Moses' story, organise a film night with the people at home. Watch the film *The Prince of Egypt* by Dreamworks, or watch a selection of clips on YouTube, and have a movie night together.



Song for the week

'Little Mo' (The Story of Moses) by DG Bible Songs



Memory verse

'And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.'

(Romans 8:28 NIV)

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Children
& Youth

Stubborn Pharaoh is eventually changed

**Bible verses:**

Exodus 12:31

Israel leaves Egypt

**Aim:**To know that Moses is patient
and changes Pharaoh's mind**Today's fruit:**

Patience



Memory verse

'And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.'

(Romans 8:28 *NIV*)



Start it

Today we are going to hear that the Israelites were allowed to leave with Moses.



Tell it

Share a child-friendly version of Exodus 12:31.

Sit in a circle and ask the group to share together:

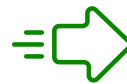
- Moses had to be patient with Pharaoh. What things do you have to wait for?
- Is there someone who shows you patience?
- Are there people you are patient with?
- Pharaoh eventually set the Israelite slaves free. What is freedom for you?
- How do you like to spend your free time?
- Like Pharaoh, do you ever change your mind?



Sing It

'The Lions Roar' by Sarah Pickering
uploaded by Vineyard Worship UK & Ireland

'Friend of God' by Israel Houghton uploaded
by Spring Harvest – Topic



Action it

Games and activities to reinforce the Bible passage:

- Pretend that you are the Israelites leaving slavery and walking into freedom (perhaps using two types of music and two dances: one for slave, one for free).
- Try standing still for as long as possible; or try making someone laugh – these are good games for testing patience.
- Have a drink or snack, but serve somebody else first to work on your own patience.