

The Passover Story



A long time ago in a country called Egypt, God's people, the Israelite nation, lived a very hard life. It was a hot and dry desert, with one river running through it. The Nile River was a something that the Egyptians worshipped as it was what helped them survive in this harsh land.

The river brought them life through providing water for their crops which grew on the sides of the river banks. But to the Israelites, the Nile River held many sad memories.

One mother needed to save her little boy from the harsh ruler of Egypt – Pharaoh. Working under the direction of God she prepared a little basket for her son and gently laid him in it. His big sister, Miriam, watched and wondered at her mother as she took him to the river and let him drift off on the current.



She ran alongside the basket until it became caught in the bulrushes along the river bank. Quietly she crouched down as she heard voices drifting down the river, coming closer all the time. It was the Princess – Pharaoh's daughter.

By this time Baby Moses was very hungry and had begun to cry loudly. The Princess heard his cries and took pity on him. She tenderly lifted him to herself all the while looking around to see who would have left a baby in the river. Miriam bravely stepped out of the bulrushes and asked: *"Your majesty, could I find someone to feed this little baby for you?"*

Miriam hurried to fetch her mother and little Moses ended up with his own family, with his own mother again for many more years as he continued to grow up in the traditions and beliefs of all the Israelites living in Egypt. When he was about 3 years old he went to live with the Princess in Pharaoh's palace.

As time went on, Moses grew into a young man. He was considered an outsider but was given many royal privileges as the Princess's son. One day when he was watching the building that was happening around the palace he was shocked to see the bad treatment of the Israelite slaves who were beaten by their taskmasters. He became so angry that he did a really bad thing – he killed one of the Egyptians, hid his body in the sand, then

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knowing that he would make the Pharaoh very angry, he ran away to the desert.

He stayed in the desert with a group of people called the Midianites for many years, hoping all the while that the Egyptians would forget what he had done. He met a lovely young woman whom he married and they started their family out there in the desert.



One day while Moses was watching over his flock of sheep, he saw a bush that was burning nearby...but as he looked he saw that the flames were not causing the leaves and branches on the bush to burn up. As he moved closer to see how this could be, God spoke to him and said: "*Moses, take off your shoes for you are standing on holy ground.*" Moses was so

scared to hear God talking to him, he hid his face. But God told him of a wonderful thing...

God and Moses spoke for a long time. God told Moses how sad He was that His people were suffering in Egypt. He told Moses of a plan that He had to set His people free. But do you know what Moses said? He was too afraid to do it on his own; he also told God that he wasn't sure if he could speak to Pharaoh without stumbling over his words. And because God is a gracious God he brought Aaron to Moses. Aaron was Moses' brother and together they went to see the great Pharaoh.



Pharaoh was a stubborn hard man who liked having the Israelites work for him. They built his great buildings, they built his pyramids, they worked his fields...and he didn't have to pay them. But he was also scared of the Israelites as he was afraid that they would one day rise up against him to try to take Egypt for their own.

God sent Pharaoh 10 warnings through Moses and his brother – these warnings were horrid...God sent plagues to Egypt. As the plague struck Pharaoh and his people Pharaoh would say that he would release the Israelites, but each time the plague was over Pharaoh would immediately harden his heart and stop them from leaving.

What do you think of these plagues?

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1 Water turned into blood (remember the River Nile was the Egyptians life source?)

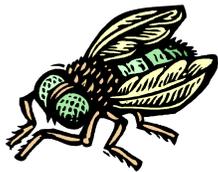


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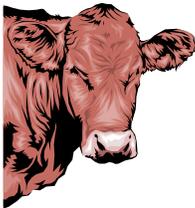
2 Frogs infested every part of Egypt – they came hopping out of the Nile and filled the streets, homes, palace, cooking pots and market



3 Little creatures called gnats infested the Egyptians...they made them itch and scratch from sunup until sundown.



4 Flies came in their droves. They sat on everything and everybody. They put their germs on the Egyptians food and caused many to get sick.



5 All of the Egyptians livestock, like cattle, donkeys and sheep, became ill. They dropped dead where they stood.

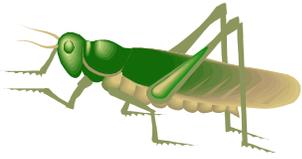


6 The Egyptians developed painful sores all over their bodies.

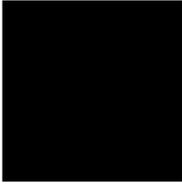


7 Thunder and hail struck the Egyptians and their crops, the animals that had not died from disease where struck down with hailstones.

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8 Locusts came swarming over the land – there were so many of them that the sky was black as they flew in. They devoured the Egyptians crops.



9 Then God sent darkness for 3 days. He blotted out the sun which was another thing the Egyptians worshipped.

But then even as Moses went to Pharaoh again and said: "The God of my people, the God of the Israelites says: "Let my people go!" Pharaoh hardened his heart and said: "NO!"

Moses turned in sadness because he knew that the next and last plague that God was going to send would cause such grief and pain in the Egyptians lives. Moses and Aaron went to their people and gave them these instructions:



- ✓ Kill a spotless lamb and take the blood of it and paint it onto the doorposts of you house on the 10th day of this month.
- ✓ Eat the roasted meat of the lamb along with bitter herbs on the same night. When you make your bread on this night, make it without yeast

- as you will not have time for it to rise.
- ✓ Eat it standing, fully dressed, ready to go with your walking stick in your hand.

The Israelites obeyed, but that night as they waited for Moses to tell them it was time to go...all across Egypt they could hear the wailing and crying of the Egyptian families who had lost their first born child and first born animals. But the people who had obeyed God, through His servant Moses, were not harmed.



Pharaoh in his grief and pain summoned Moses and told him that the Israelites were free to go.....