

Passover Story (BLB)

Adapted from Godly Play

Materials:

Beige felt square	River
Joseph	Small basket for baby
2 Pharaohs	Baby
Bricks	Palace
Length of chain	2 blue sea strips (the Red Sea)
Moses	Seder plate with food pictures
Hebrews	Booklet (Haggadah)

Presentation:

Carry the story box carefully with two hands to the circle and place it beside you. Sit quietly until you are ready. Take out the large square of beige felt and spread it out slowly.

This is the desert. It is full of sand.

Trace the edge of the square.

The desert is a strange and wild place. At night it is very cold, but in the day it is burning hot. There is almost no water at all....the desert is always changing. The wind comes. And as it blows it shifts and reshapes. So the desert is never the same.

Pause, place your hands in your lap, and sit back a moment.

Once, long ago and far away, many Hebrews lived in the desert in the land of Egypt. They were all relatives of a man named Joseph.

Place Joseph figure in sand.

Joseph was very helpful and kind to the king of Egypt, who was called Pharaoh.

Place Pharaoh figure.

Joseph helped Pharaoh govern their country of Egypt with care and wisdom and the Hebrews and Egyptians lived together in peace, for many years.

Move the 2 figures close together.

Years passed...

Replace Joseph and Pharaoh I with new Pharaoh.

...and now there was a new Pharaoh ruling Egypt. None of the Egyptians remembered Joseph. Instead, many Egyptians disliked the Hebrews - especially the new Pharaoh.

Place Hebrew figures about 6" apart from the Pharaoh.

This new Pharaoh wanted the Hebrews for slaves. Pharaoh caught them in a trap.

Cup both hands over the people as though you were trapping them.

Pharaoh asked the Hebrews to make bricks...

Place bricks next to Hebrews.

... enough bricks to build a wall around the entire city.

The Hebrews had to do what Pharaoh said. They had to work when Pharaoh said. They had to live where Pharaoh said. They couldn't do anything on their own. The Hebrews were slaves for a long time.

Place chain under the Hebrews.

Then one day, Pharaoh was told that a Hebrew boy would grow up to become the ruler of Egypt. Pharaoh had no idea **which** boy this would be, so he decided to have **ALL the boy babies** of the Hebrews killed. This was a very sad time for the Hebrews. The Hebrews cried to God for help.

One baby boy was born early, and his mother hid him from the Egyptians in the reeds by the riverbank.

Place baby figure in basket at edge of blue felt river.

The Pharaoh's daughter found the baby in the reeds and was so excited that she took him back to the palace to live with her. The boy, named Moses, grew up in the palace.

Place Moses figure next to palace model.

But he knew that he was a Hebrew. He didn't like to see his people suffering as slaves. Moses was so angry that he ran away and worked as a shepherd in the fields, and he tried not to think about Egypt.

Move Moses away from the palace. Surround with sheep.

But one day a very strange thing happened. While he was tending his sheep, he heard a voice. The voice of God told Moses to go to Pharaoh and say "Let the Hebrews go!"

Move Moses back to Pharaoh.

When Moses went to Pharaoh, Pharaoh said "no." Then many strange things happened that slowly worked to change Pharaoh's mind. Moses went and said again, "Let the Hebrews go!" Finally, Pharaoh said "yes." Moses rushed back to the Hebrews to tell them the news.

Rush Moses back and speed up your voice by running together the following sentences:

The Hebrews got ready quickly! They had to hurry before Pharaoh changed his mind. So they took unleavened bread because there wasn't enough time for it to rise.

Move the people.

They moved toward the great sea...

*Take out blue sea strips and place them in the middle of the box.
Move the people to the water. Press them up against the river's edge.*

Then they heard the war chariots. Pharaoh's army was coming!! They were pressed up against the water, trapped again. Moses called to God, and God showed Moses...

Fold the two strips back from the center and move Moses through

...the way *through* the water to freedom.

Move others through as you say:

When all of the Hebrews passed through, the water behind them closed....

Close the water.

...and they were free! Pharaoh's army could not get them.

Now that all of the People were free on the other side, the Hebrews thanked God. They sang songs and danced in celebration.

Passover is a holy day to remember that Moses led the Hebrews out of slavery from Egypt across the Red Sea to freedom. A special meal, the Seder, is prepared. Songs are sung, food and wine are blessed, and the story of Passover is told.

Place booklet on table.

The youngest child at the table asks the Four Questions about the meaning of Passover, which ask how this holy day is different from other days. After each question, the head of the household reads the same answer:

“Because we were slaves in Egypt, and now we are a free people.”

Open booklet and read:

1) Why is this night different from all other nights?

Children respond: “Because we were slaves in Egypt, and now we are a free people.”

2) Why on other nights do we eat bread, but this night we eat only matzah?

Children respond: “Because we were slaves in Egypt, and now we are a free people.”

3) Why is food being dipped in salt water?

Children respond: “Because we were slaves in Egypt, and now we are a free people.”

4) Why do we eat bitter herbs?

Children respond: “Because we were slaves in Egypt, and now we are a free people.”

And then the Seder meal begins. There are special foods on a special plate:

Take out the picture of a Seder Plate. Point to each item on the plate as you describe it.

Matzah - (goes under the plate) a big cracker, in memory of how quickly the Hebrews had to leave their homes to be safe from Pharaoh. They didn't have time to let bread rise!

Bitter herbs - (horseradish); reminder of the bitterness of slavery

Charoset - (pronounced “khar-oh-set”) chopped apples and nuts; looks like the bricks and mortar the Hebrew slaves used to build the Pyramids

Roasted bone - reminds people of the lamb sacrificed to protect their children

Egg - reminds us of the festival offerings made at Temple

Parsley dipped in salt water – reminds us of the tears of the slaves

Lettuce – a second herb that reminds us of the return of spring

As the Seder meal comes to an end, everyone eats a last, special piece of matzah and thanks God for the very special gift of freedom.

Wondering Questions:

I wonder what part of the story you liked the best?

I wonder what part is most important?

I wonder where you are in the story?

I wonder if there is any part of the story that we can leave out and still have all the story we need?