

BIBLE TIMELINE ASSEMBLIES

27 RED SEA RESCUE

Bible Base: Exodus 4: 18 - 14: 31

Key Christian Belief: In a broken world, God wants to rescue us.

Aim: To help the children understand God's rescue plan for us.

You Will Need:

- the attached PowerPoint presentation

Introduction

Show the first three pictures from the PowerPoint and ask if the children know what movies these scenes are from. Give clues as necessary. (Finding Nemo; Sleeping Beauty; Toy Story 2) Now ask what these movies have in common? Help the children to realise that they are all rescue stories. (Marlin and Dory rescue Nemo; the prince rescues Sleeping Beauty; Buzz Lightyear rescues Woody.)

Introduce the fourth picture and ask if the children if they can remember what is happening in this scene. Today we will hear how God rescued the people of Israel from being slaves in Egypt.

Bible Story

Tell the story as follows but ask the children to listen out for the words 'the countdown has begun.' When they hear these words they are to punch the air and shout 'ten!' After that, every time you raise your hand to punch the air, they are to join in with the next number in the sequence: 'nine...eight...seven...six...five...four...three...two...one...go!'

Moses and Aaron went to their leaders and told them everything God had said. Then they went to tell King Pharaoh that God said he was to let the people of Israel go.

'Who is this God that I should listen to Him?' asked Pharaoh.

'Who is God?' said Moses. 'Our God says: "I am. You think the gods you believe in are real but they are not. I am. You think your gods are the ones who make the crops grow. But they are not. I am. You think you are in charge, Pharaoh, but you are not. I am." '

'Nonsense!' thundered Pharaoh and he threw Moses and Aaron out of his palace. Once they had left he told his officials to make the Hebrew slaves work even harder. 'Tell them they have to make the same number of bricks - but from now on we're not giving them the straw they need to make them with. They will have to gather that for themselves. That will teach them to come running to me asking me to let them go!'

'Now look what's happened' the leaders of the people of Israel complained. 'All you've done is make things worse. Our people are exhausted.'

Moses prayed to God. 'Now what do I do?' he enquired.

God told Moses and Aaron to go and meet King Pharaoh down by the River Nile where he went every morning. 'Tell him again to let my people go.' said God. 'He won't listen to you at first, but sooner or later he will. I am going to show Him who I really am.'

So Moses and Aaron met King Pharaoh next morning, down by the river. 'God says you are to let our people go into the desert to worship Him' they said, but Pharaoh refused, just as God had said he would. 'All right then' said Moses. 'The countdown has begun!'

TEN

Aaron stretched out his walking stick over the river and immediately the water turned to blood. Fish died, the Egyptians could not drink the water and the river smelt. But still Pharaoh refused to let the Hebrew slaves go.

NINE

Seven days later, Aaron stretched out his walking stick again and frogs came up out of the rivers and ponds on to the land. Soon they were everywhere. Wherever the people of Egypt looked there were frogs - in their beds, in their shoes, in their kitchens, in their cupboards and guess what they found in their lunchboxes? No - ham and cheese! (Sorry.)

'All right! All right!' said King Pharaoh at last. 'I'll let your people go. Just get rid of these awful frogs!'

So Moses prayed and there were no more frogs. But once the frogs had gone, Pharaoh changed his mind and wouldn't let the people go after all.

EIGHT

Next, Aaron stretched out his walking stick again and the dust on the ground turned into hundreds of tiny lice, which got on to the people's skin and into their hair. Even their animals were covered with lice. But once again, Pharaoh refused to let the people go.

SEVEN

Then there were flies - swarms of them everywhere in Egypt - but not in Goshen where the Hebrew slaves lived. There were no flies there.

'All right!' said Pharaoh at last. 'I'll let your people go. Just don't go too far away.' But once the flies had gone, Pharaoh changed his mind again.

SIX

'If you don't let us go' Moses warned 'all your farm animals will die.' 'Never!' replied the king. Sure enough, next day all the farm animals belonging to the people of Egypt became sick and died but none of the farm animals belonging to the Hebrew slaves died. God was showing King Pharaoh that the God of Israel was the one true God. The gods he believed in were powerless to help him but still King Pharaoh wouldn't listen.

FIVE

Next the Egyptians were covered in terrible boils - all over their bodies, but King Pharaoh still refused to let the people go.

FOUR

'If you don't let us go' Moses warned 'God is going to send a terrible hailstorm - the worst there has ever been.' Some of the officials who had been listening to Moses made sure their families and animals were all brought inside but some ignored Moses' warning.

Soon the worst storm anyone had ever seen blew up. Lightning filled the skies and large hailstones came pounding down. Those caught outside were killed. But the storm did not hit the slaves living in Goshen.

'Please forgive me. I have been wrong' said King Pharaoh at last. 'I will definitely let you go this time.' But once again, when the storm had gone, he changed his mind.

THREE

'God is going to send a plague of locusts.' Moses warned. They will eat everything that grows in your fields.' This time, the king's officials tried to persuade him to let the people go. 'All right - I'll let the men go' said Pharaoh 'but no one else.'

So the locusts came and devoured every plant and tree in Egypt.

'I'm sorry' said the king. 'Please forgive me once more. Just get rid of these locusts and you can go.' But once more the king broke his promise.

TWO

Next there was thick darkness over the land of Egypt. The Egyptians could not see and could not move. Only in Goshen, where the Hebrew slaves lived, was there any light.

'All right! You can go.' shouted the king. 'Just leave your animals behind.'

'The animals must come with us!' insisted Moses.

'Get out of my sight - and don't come back!' yelled Pharaoh.

ONE

'Very well' said Moses as he turned to go. 'But at midnight tonight the oldest son in every family in Egypt will die. Tomorrow there will be great weeping in all the land.'

Moses told the people of Israel what God had said would happen. 'Now get ready' he said. 'Each family is to kill a lamb and sprinkle it's blood on their doorposts. The angel of death is coming to visit the people of Egypt at midnight tonight and the oldest son in every family will die. But when he sees the blood on your doorposts, he will pass over you and you will be safe. Have some roast lamb to eat tonight, and drink some wine but be ready to leave at any moment. God is setting you free.'

That night, just as Moses had said, the oldest son in every Egyptian family died but the people of Israel were spared. Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, 'Up. Leave my people and go and worship the Lord God. Take your families and animals with you.'

GO

So God's people packed their belongings. The Egyptians, afraid that they might all die, gave them gifts of silver and gold. 'Hurry and leave,' they urged.

The people travelled for a long way until they came to the edge of the Red Sea. Just then they heard the rumble of chariots and horses in the distance behind them. 'Pharaoh and his army are chasing us!' the people cried. 'We're all going to die!'

Sure enough it looked as if they were trapped. The Red Sea was in front of them and Pharaoh's army were chasing them from behind. They had nowhere to turn.

'Stay calm' Moses urged the people 'and you will see. God is fighting for us today!'

God told Moses to stretch his walking stick out across the Red Sea and a strong east wind began to blow. The waters of the sea divided and there was a path for the people of Israel to walk through. Pharaoh's army arrived just in time to see what was happening. They started to follow the people of Israel along the path through the sea. However, the moment the last of the people of Israel reached the other side, the waters began to collapse in on the Egyptian horsemen and their chariots. Every one of them drowned.

Meanwhile, safely on the other side of the sea, the people of Israel sang and danced. God had come to their rescue. At last they were free!

Exploring Christian Belief

This is perhaps the most important story in the Old Testament - the story of God and His people up until the time Jesus was born. The people of Israel never forgot what God had done for them - how they had been slaves in Egypt and God had set them free. He had chosen them to be His people even though they had done nothing to deserve it and He had shown His great love for them by coming to their rescue. Now He was promising to be their God and to be with them forever. No wonder they sang and danced!

We may never have been slaves in Egypt - but we are all trapped in a world in which people often suffer as a result of the selfishness and greed of others. We live in a world where others can be cruel and we may often be treated unfairly. Sometimes, if we are honest, we are the ones who are selfish, greedy, and cruel. The world we live in is not the way God meant it to be.

But as in Moses' day, the good news is that God has a rescue plan for us. The Bible says that He has shown His love for us by sending His Son, Jesus, to take the blame for the wrong things we have done. Christians believe that if we put our trust in Him and choose to follow Him - just as the people chose to put lamb's blood on their doorposts to show that they believed God's promise - God says we can be His people. He will be with us always, taking care of us and using us to make a difference, and one day He will take us to be with Him in a place where there will be no more suffering and where we will be free from all wrong things forever!

God has come to our rescue. Isn't that something for us to celebrate, and to sing and dance about too?

Song

Invite the children to celebrate what God has done for them by singing a song such as Get Up And Dance from the album Jesus Is My Superhero by Hillsong Kids.