



The Story of God | Deliverance

Deliverance | Story

(bridge) Story from... Genesis 26-50; Exodus 1

Years later Isaac had a son named Jacob - his name was changed to Israel - meaning “struggler with God”. The Hebrews would then be called the people of Israel after Jacob. Jacob had twelve sons. One of his sons, named Joseph, ended up living in Egypt. (Joseph’s story is an interesting one for another time...) Joseph invited his family to join him to escape a horrible famine that covered all the land. While living in Egypt, the people of Israel grew into a large nation. After Joseph died, the King of Egypt named Pharaoh, feared Israel because of their great numbers. He treated them horribly and made Israel his slaves. But God promised he would bless his people...

Story from... Exodus 1-2; 7-12; 19-20

Years later God inspired a man named Moses to rescue the people of Israel from slavery. He sent Moses to warn Pharaoh that terrible things would happen to the Egyptians if they didn’t release God’s people. Pharaoh was arrogant and didn’t listen, so God sent a series of horrible plagues to punish the Egyptians, but these plagues did not affect the Israelites.

God turned water to blood, filled the nation with frogs, gnats and flies, killed livestock, covered people in boils, destroyed the land with hail and locusts, and brought great darkness over the land.

In spite of these horrific events, Pharaoh would not let the Israelites go. So God sent one more plague... a plague that would take the life of every firstborn male and animal in Egypt. But God provided a way for the firstborn of Israel to be spared.

He instructed them to take a first-born male lamb without defect, and sacrifice it to him without breaking any of its bones. Then, they were to take the blood from the lamb and put it on the doorposts of their homes. So the people of Israel did what God told them to do.

At midnight God sent an angel of death through Egypt taking the life of all the firstborn, but passing over the homes that had blood on their doorposts. The Egyptians wept over this

tragedy and begged the Israelites to leave, releasing them from their slavery. And now Israel, a large nation of over two million people, set out to return to the Promised Land.

But Pharaoh wanted revenge – he sent his armies after Israel to catch them and kill them. When the Israelites approached the Red Sea they thought they were trapped by the waters and would be caught by the Egyptians. But God split the waters so that the Israelites could cross the river on dry ground. When Pharaoh’s armies tried to cross behind them, God brought a huge wind that blew the waters back over them. The Egyptian Army was completely wiped out!

The Israelites became nomads, wandering the desert for forty years trying to get back to the Promised Land. As they were traveling, God called Moses into his presence on the top of a mountain. God gave Moses instructions on how the people could return to following his way of living. The Bible calls these instructions the Ten Commandments, which were God’s basic rules for living life close to God and out from under slavery and oppression.

*“I am your God who rescued you from slavery in Egypt.
Put me above everything else. Do not worship other things.
Do not misuse or disrespect my name.
Remember to set aside a day each week to rest and worship me.
Honor your parents. Don’t murder or steal or lie.
Do not sleep with anyone but your husband or wife—be faithful.
Don’t lust after what others have—be satisfied with what I give you.”*

But the people did not want to live within God’s boundaries and rebelled again, calling these instructions a new kind of slavery. Even those who tried to obey these rules found they could not keep them perfectly.

Because God is perfect and good, he could not overlook their sins and his punishment was death. A life must be given to pay for each person’s disobedience. But God loved his people, so he provided a way for them to substitute the life of an innocent animal in place of their own.

People would bring pure animals to God, asking him to transfer their sins to the helpless animal. The animal was killed and its blood was given in place of the guilty person.

This system of sacrifice continued for hundreds of years. Sacrifices for sins had to be given day after day, year after year. And God accepted this, but only as a symbol of what was to come. He was preparing a final sacrifice that would pay for the world’s sins once and for all.

I’ve told you a lot so far. Let me ask a few questions...

Deliverance | Dialogue

Remember this is a dialog, not a quiz. The “answers” below each question are there to help you as a leader guide the discussion toward some key ideas.

What parts of God’s promise to Abraham do we see beginning to be fulfilled?

How many descendants did Abraham have in just a couple of generations?

Millions!

How did God treat the Israelites enemies?

“I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you...”

What did all of the plagues show us about God?

He is powerful...more powerful than Pharaoh or humans. He has control of nature and all things.

What did God specifically say about the animal they were to sacrifice?

First born, male lamb, perfect-without defect.

Why do you think God required blood to be put on the Israelites door posts in order to be saved?

What does blood represent?

Life is in the blood

How might you have felt that Passover night as a Hebrew?

Why do you think God gave the Commandments and Laws?

So that his people would know how to once again live close to him in relationship. To give them the best possible life.

Which of these commandments do you think is the hardest to keep?

What do God’s Commandments and Laws show us about him?

He cares about his honor/ He wants to be the only “god” in our life.

He cares about marriage, faithfulness, truth and honesty.

He wants us to trust him and be satisfied with what he lovingly gives us.

What is the result of following in God's ways?

A life lived close to Him. A full and abundant life.

What do we learn about God in this story?

(repeated) He is powerful...more powerful than Pharaoh or humans. He has control of nature and all things.

He keeps His Word

He will not compromise, does not back down

Uses those willing to be used

Loves His people

Deliverance | Additional Dialogue

How do you determine the right way to live your life?

What happens when we are left to determine this for ourselves?

How are things working around the world?

Does it seem like things are great? Why?

