

12. Leaving Egypt

Introduction: The previous story took place during the seven years of drought and famine. We saw how God saved the lives of Jacob and his household. God also let Jacob reunite with his son Joseph after many years of separation.

The entire household moved to Egypt to live with Joseph. Over many years, Jacob's descendant, the Israelites, lived in Egypt and grew in number to a vast population. (Genesis 45:5–11; 46:3; Exodus 1:7)

Egypt had a new king. He did not know about Joseph. He saw that the population of Israelites was growing larger and larger. He was afraid they would get together and revolt (Exodus 1:8–9), so he forced the Israelites do hard labor in Egypt and took away their freedoms. But the more they suffered, the more they grew in number. (Exodus 1:11–14)

The Israelites were suffering. So they prayed to God and asked Him to save them. God asked a man named Moses to bring these Israelites out of Egypt and back to the land God had given to Abraham. (Exodus 2:23–25; 3:9–10; 3:16–17)

When God called Moses, Moses was afraid that neither the king nor the Israelites would believe that God has sent him. But God told him, "Do not be afraid, I will go with you, I will help you." God also called Moses' brother Aaron to go with Moses to meet the king of Egypt. (Exodus 3:11–12; 4:14–16)

When Moses and Aaron arrived in front of the king, they told him that God was asking him to release the Israelites from Egypt. The king did not believe them, and was not willing to release the Israelites. Then, he made the Israelites do even harder labor. (Exodus 5:1–9)

God told Moses, "You need to go to him again, to ask him to release my people. I know he will not listen. I will show him my power. I will let him know that I am God." (Exodus 6:1–8; 7:1–5)

The king of Egypt did respond just as God had said. No matter what, he would not let the Israelites leave Egypt. God sent down ten great disasters on the Egyptians. In every disaster, the Israelites were unhurt. (Exodus 7:13–12:12)

During each disaster, Moses and Aaron would meet the king and ask him to release the Israelites. But the king would not let them go. (Exodus 7:14–11:10)

Before the tenth disaster came, God told Moses, "I will send a very severe disaster. I will cause all the Egyptian firstborn sons to die. This way, the king of Egypt will let my people leave this land. You will tell the Israelites that each household has to kill a lamb

and brush the lamb's blood onto their doors. This way, their firstborn sons will not die. They can roast the lamb and eat it. I am giving you this feast called Passover." (Exodus 12:1–33)

Just as God had said, the disaster came. This time the king of Egypt finally let the Israelites leave Egypt. (Exodus 12:29–33)

On the road, God continued to protect the Israelites. In daytime, there was a cloud to cover the sun and lead them; at night time there was fire to light the way. When they arrived next to the Red Sea, they saw the Egyptians from a distance, coming to kill them. They were afraid, because there was no place to go in front of them. (Exodus 13:20–22; 14:9–10)

The king of Egypt changed his mind and did not keep his word. He was not willing to let the Israelites go, so now he was chasing after them, to kill them. (Exodus 14:5–9)

Moses told the Israelites, "Do not be afraid, God will save us." (Exodus 14:13–14)

God asked Moses to lift his wooden stick. Moses obeyed God, putting up his wooden stick. God blew a strong wind, separating the Red Sea into two halves and the land underwater was blown dried. This was how the Israelites walked across the Red Sea. (Exodus 14:15–22)

The Egyptians chased the Israelites and when they reached the middle of the Red Sea, God asked Moses to point his wood stick towards the sea. God made the sea return, all the Egyptians were drowned in the water. (Exodus 14:26–28)

This was the way God used his mighty power to free the Israelites from the life of hard labor with no freedoms in Egypt. (Exodus 14:30)