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## **Bible Lesson 12 (BTJ)**

### **1. Introduction**

This lesson continues the story of God's mighty work in history to deliver the Israelites thorough his servants Moses and Aaron.

This lesson shows how evil the heart of man can be as shown in Pharaoh's life. Pharaoh was one of the most powerful persons living in that time of history. He had no regard for God and acted accordingly. Pharaoh and the Egyptians worshiped idols and believed their culture and religion were right. When Moses and Aaron talked to Pharaoh about God, he cared little about what they had to tell him because he did not know God.

God sent plagues upon the Egyptians to cause all of them to think about the reason for their sufferings. As Moses and Aaron interacted with Pharaoh, he had opportunities to repent of his evil ways and acknowledge God. Instead, Pharaoh hardened his heart and stubbornly refused to listen to Moses and Aaron. The judgments against Egypt showed to everyone that no being or deity could stop God from judging the Egyptians.

Finally, God executed judgment against all the firstborn in Egypt. The firstborn in each household among the Israelites were spared because God made a way of escape for them through the sacrifice of a lamb. The blood of the sacrificed lamb was applied to the lintels and doorposts of each family's house. This sacrifice of the passover lamb was God's provision of mercy and grace for the Israelites. The lamb died in their place and the applied blood was a sign of their obedience to God's instruction. Among the Israelites, no one died because God provided a way of escape for them. Among the Egyptians, from the greatest to the least, there was a great outcry as people saw that their firstborn were dead. Now Pharaoh and all the Egyptians urged the Israelites to leave the land of Egypt.

Moses and Aaron led the Israelites out of Egypt to the shore of the Red Sea. Then God made a dry road through the sea for them and they crossed over safely to the other side. The Egyptian army pursued them and were destroyed when God's power allowed the sea to return to its normal state again.

Now the Israelites were safe from the Egyptians in the wilderness on the other side of the Red Sea. Soon the Israelites complained about their living conditions and were ungrateful for having been freed from the Egyptians. God was long-suffering, merciful and gracious toward them and provided food and water for them.

### **2. Review**

**Setting:** Martin and his family were working in the garden. The conversation turned from gardening to the Bible stories they had been learning.

**Martin:** Let's talk about the Bible stories we have been hearing. These are good stories that I am hearing for the first time. When I was young like you, my children, I did not know about the Bible.

**Glenn:** I want to understand the Bible stories that Teacher is teaching us.

**Martin:** Do you remember the story about Nimrod? He was not a good man, was he, He wanted to make a name for himself. Nimrod knew about the great flood that killed everyone except Noah and his family. But, he didn't have time to think about a flood long ago. He just wanted to live for himself. Was that a good thing to do?

**Glenn:** No, of course not. When God judged the people by confusing their one language, Nimrod felt the pain like everyone else because he could not talk to everyone. He couldn't control as many people as he had before because they could not understand what he was saying.

**Martin:** If we keep on living for ourselves without any regard for God, will we escape God's judgment? If we disregard God, where will our spirit go when we die? Think about it. The Bible teaches us that when wicked people die their spirits go to an awful place, the never-ending fire of punishment. I do not want to go there. I do not want any of you, my children, to go there. That's why we must keep on talking about the Bible stories and learning from them.

**Glenn:** I learned something from the story of baby Moses. Pharaoh thought that he was most powerful and could control everyone in Egypt. However, he did not control his daughter when she saved baby Moses' life.

**Martin:** Whom do you think controlled Pharaoh's daughter who did not serve or worship God? Who caused her to walk by the place where Moses was floating on the bank of the Nile River in a specially prepared basket? Who gave Jochebed, Moses' mother, the idea to put baby Moses in a basket by the banks of the Nile River?

**Glenn:** I think God controlled her even though she did not know it. God led her to the small basket that had baby Moses inside it. Pharaoh's daughter rescued Moses. She saved Moses from death according to God's plan!

**Martin:** Why did God give Jochebed the idea to hide Moses in a basket by the banks of the Nile River?

**Glenn:** I know why. Already, God had chosen Moses to lead Israel out of Egypt after he was a grown man. God worked in a special way to keep Moses alive for a job which he would do much later in life. God is so great. He knows everything!

**Martin:** That's right. God knows everything. Before he even made the world, he knew that he would choose Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. God knew that Moses would be reluctant to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. God knew that Moses would ask for someone to help him with his work. God knew that he would choose Aaron to help Moses with his work.

**Glenn:** Isn't that amazing? God knows everything. He truly is the greatest! No person or being or power is equal to him.

### **3. Plagues upon Egypt**

**Setting:** It was time for a meeting again. The villagers came and it was time to begin.

**Teacher:** I am glad that all of you came to the meeting today. There is much more to teach you about Moses, an important servant of God.

After Moses and Aaron had returned to the land of Egypt, they told the Israelite leaders how God revealed his plan to deliver them from the Egyptians. They told them that God had heard their cries of distress and now he was going to take them out of Egypt to the land of Canaan, the promised land. They showed them the miraculous signs that God had given to them. The Israelites saw the signs and believed everything Moses and Aaron told them. They bowed before God and worshiped him. They desperately wanted God to rescue them so that they would no longer be slaves in Egypt.

After Moses and Aaron told the Israelite leaders about God's plan to rescue them, they went to Pharaoh to tell him about God's plans. As they stood before Pharaoh, the most powerful ruler in the world, they respectfully said to him, "The LORD, the God of Israel, says: Let my people go so they may hold a festival in my honor in the wilderness."

Pharaoh did not believe in God. He did not believe that anyone was greater than himself. He replied to Moses and Aaron, "Who is the LORD? Why should I listen to him and let Israel go? I don't know the LORD, and I will not let Israel go." Pharaoh was determined to be the one in control. He was not going to allow his slaves to leave Egypt. Let's talk about Pharaoh and the Egyptians: Why did Pharaoh so arrogantly challenge the Lord? Why didn't he at least listen to what Moses and Aaron had to say? Pharaoh and the

Egyptians did not worship God. They were idol worshipers. They made images of animals and worshiped them. Pharaoh and the Egyptians worshiped things which God had made, but not God who had made them. They also believed Pharaoh was a deity. These beliefs and practices were an abomination to God.

Moses and Aaron kept asking Pharaoh for permission for the Israelites to take a three-day journey into the wilderness to worship God and to offer sacrifices to him. Pharaoh, however, did not listen to them. He did not want the Israelites to stop working as his slaves. He said, “Moses and Aaron, why are you distracting the people from their tasks? Get back to work now! Look at what you are doing. There are many of your people in the land who are supposed to be working hard for me. You are interfering with their work.”

Then Pharaoh commanded all the taskmasters and foremen to give the Israelites more work to do. “Make the Israelites find their own straw for bricks. Tell them they still have to make the same amount of bricks each day,” commanded angry Pharaoh. Now the Israelites had to work very hard every day. The work requirements of Pharaoh were too hard for them. Soon the Israelites became upset at Moses and Aaron and said, “Ever since you talked to Pharaoh, he has increased the hardships upon us. Our work load is now impossibly difficult.”

Moses heard the accusations of the Israelites and spoke to God about it. God reassured Moses that he was going to deliver Israel from the land of Egypt and said. “You will see what I will do to Pharaoh. When he feels the force of my strong hand, he will let the people go. In fact, he will force them to leave his land!” God already knew what would happen in Egypt. He knew what he would do in the land of Egypt which would cause a change in the heart of Pharaoh, who arrogantly said “I do not know the Lord.” Pharaoh would find out who the Lord whom he defied was.

Then God told Moses again that he had heard the cries of the Israelites in Egypt and that he was going to deliver them. God told Moses that he remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God is faithful and always does what he promises.

God told Moses, “Tell the people that I am the Lord. I will free you from slavery in Egypt. I will redeem you by my power and great acts of judgment. I will claim you as my own people and I will be your God. I will bring you into the land I promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I will give it to you as your very own possession. I am the LORD!”

Then God told Moses and Aaron that he was going to bring great hardships upon Egypt. These hardships would be so severe that in great distress Pharaoh would send Israel out of Egypt. God told Moses and Aaron that Pharaoh, the powerful ruler of Egypt, would feel the pain of his righteous judgments upon Egypt. He would learn who God was the hard way because he hardened his heart against God.

Let's think about this: The way Pharaoh responded to God was wrong. Instead of submitting to God, he was determined to be the greatest, even greater than God. No person regardless of his power and political position is as great as God is. As you listen to these lessons, do not respond to God in unbelief the way Pharaoh did. Believe God and have faith in him alone. Then he will show mercy and grace to you and save you from the guilt and penalty of your sin.

Moses and Aaron appeared before Pharaoh again. This time they performed a miraculous sign which God had given them before Pharaoh. Aaron threw down his staff before Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a serpent! But that didn't move Pharaoh's hard heart one bit. He called in his own wise men and sorcerers and they did the same thing with their magic. They threw down their staffs and they too became serpents! Then Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs. Pharaoh, however, took no account of it and he refused to listen to Moses and Aaron just as the LORD had predicted. Pharaoh was determined to resist God and to fight against him all the way.

Listen to this important point: People who are proud and haughty follow the ways of Satan. They do not submit to God. They think they are in control of their own life, however, that is not true. They are living as Satan wants them to live. As you listen to the rest of this story, you will see how foolish and wrong it was for Pharaoh to fight against God. Do not be like Pharaoh. You cannot win when you fight against God.

Then God told Moses and Aaron to stretch out the staff, which had previously been used to turn into a snake, over the Nile River in front of Pharaoh and it would turn into blood. Aaron did as God commanded him and the Nile River turned into blood. Pharaoh called his Egyptian magicians to do the same feat. When he saw that they too could do this, he hardened his heart and had no regard for God whatsoever. "This is nothing," he thought, "my magicians can do everything they do." Pharaoh foolishly hardened his heart against God and believed that he would ultimately win against God.

A week later God sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh with the command that he was to let the Israelites go. This time, in order to show Pharaoh that he really needed to listen to

God, God told Moses and Aaron to make frogs come up from the Nile River and cover the land. Moses told Aaron to stretch out the staff over the Nile River as God had commanded. Aaron obeyed God's command and frogs came up from the Nile River and covered the land of Egypt. The frogs were everywhere, even inside houses all throughout the land of Egypt.

Then the Egyptian magicians did the same thing. When Pharaoh saw that his magicians duplicated what Moses and Aaron did, he hardened his heart again. Later he asked Moses and Aaron to plead with God to send away the frogs and promised to let the Israelites go if God sent away the frogs. When God sent the frogs away, Pharaoh broke his promise to let Israel go. Pharaoh was very foolish in all that he did against God. He was fighting against God who is all-powerful, holy and righteous.

Then God told Moses and Aaron to strike the ground and cause a plague of gnats to cover all the land of Egypt. Aaron struck the earth with his staff and gnats covered the whole land of Egypt. The Egyptian magicians tried to do the same, but this time they failed. The magicians warned Pharaoh saying, "This is the finger of God." The magicians realized that they were outdone by the power of God. Pharaoh should have listened to their warning.

Do you think that Pharaoh listened to Moses and Aaron this time? No, proud Pharaoh kept on hardening his heart. He refused to listen to them. He ignored the magicians warnings too. Pharaoh acted just as the LORD had said. Pharaoh acted foolishly. No one can fight against God and win.

God sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh again. This time they told him if he did not let the Israelites go, God would send swarms of insects upon all the land of Egypt except the land of Goshen where the Israelites lived. Do you think Pharaoh listened to them? Would he give permission for the Israelites to go to the wilderness to worship God?

Pharaoh was a very proud man. He refused to listen to God so God sent the plague of swarms of insects all throughout the land of Egypt except Goshen. Flies crawled all over Pharaoh and the Egyptians. They crawled around in their clothes, on their food, in their beds. They were everywhere! It was an awful chaotic mess. Again, Pharaoh hardened his heart against God and refused to allow the Israelites to go. Pharaoh acted foolishly. By now he should have been crying out to God for mercy and submitting to God.

Then God sent a plague upon the Egyptians that affected their livestock. Their cattle, horses, sheep, goats and camels died. In the land of Goshen, not an animal died because God made a distinction between his chosen people, the Israelites, and the Egyptians.

When God sent this plague, Pharaoh, the Egyptians and their idols were powerless to stop the judgment of a holy and righteous God. What did Pharaoh do this time? He just kept on hardening his heart against God. Pharaoh acted foolishly as though he was controlled by Satan. Instead of choosing to believe in God, he allowed the ugly rebellious feeling within himself to rule over his decision making. No person, even if they are controlled by Satan, can begin to overpower God.

Pharaoh continued to harden his heart against God. His attitude toward God was totally wrong. He should have given up and submitted to God. Since he continued to defy God, God made a plague of boils to break out on man and beast among the Egyptians. Painful sores of boils covered the bodies of the Egyptians simply because Pharaoh was determined to overcome God. Man and beast alike suffered. The magicians could not stand before Moses this time because horrible boils were on them as well. What did Pharaoh do this time? Did he give up? When he saw all the suffering among the people he ruled, did his heart soften? Was he concerned for them? No, Pharaoh's heart was as hardened as ever. He refused to listen to Moses and Aaron. He continued his foolish stubbornness against God. He acted as though Satan controlled him in every thing.

Then God said, "Tomorrow, about this time, I will send a very heavy hail, such as has not been seen in Egypt from the day it was founded until now. Bring your livestock and whatever you have in the field to safety. Every man and beast that is struck by the hail will die." Some of the Egyptian officials brought in their servants and livestock because they had seen enough of the judgments of God against them. They knew that God was greater than Pharaoh and his magicians. They did not want to endure unnecessary pain and death.

But, many other Egyptians had no regard for God and they left their servants and livestock outside. They acted foolishly. Then God sent the terrible hailstorm and it struck down everything in the open field. People, animals, plants, and trees were destroyed as they were pummeled with hailstones. People and animals ran for cover but it was too late.

While the hail storm devastated the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen where the Israelites lived, there was no hail. Everything was so peaceful there. God's judgment was upon haughty Pharaoh and all of the Egyptians. Now they were really feeling the pain of resisting him. Even Pharaoh was frightened and begged for mercy. God stopped the storm and Pharaoh hardened his heart again. "I rule this land. I'm not giving in to this God of Moses, Aaron and the Israelites," he thought. How foolish of Pharaoh.

After the hailstorm, God sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh to warn him that another plague was going to strike Egypt. If Pharaoh allowed the Israelites to go worship God, the



plague would be averted. Otherwise, there would be much devastation to the Egyptian's crops by swarms of locusts. This time Pharaoh's servants tried to get him to understand that he should allow the Israelites to go worship God. "Don't you know that our land is ruined?" they asked. Do you think that Pharaoh listened to them and allowed the Israelites to go worship God this time? Did he use good judgment and submit to God's will for the Israelites to leave the land so they could worship him?

Proud Pharaoh turned away from his servants advice and refused to allow the Israelites to leave the land to worship God. Then Moses raised his staff over Egypt, and the LORD caused an east wind to blow over the land all that day and through the night. Locusts swarmed over the whole land of Egypt and they devoured every plant in the fields and all the fruit on the trees that had survived the hailstorm. Not a single green leaf was left on the trees and plants throughout the land of Egypt. The devastation caused by the locusts was very great throughout the land of Egypt.

This time Pharaoh quickly begged Moses and Aaron to ask God to remove the locusts. He saw the awful devastation that happened. Moses and Aaron pleaded Pharaoh's case before God and he caused a very strong west wind to blow them into the Red Sea. All of them were gone, not a single locust remained in Egypt. Did Pharaoh now allow the Israelites to go worship God? No, of course not. Pharaoh changed his mind again. He was too proud to bow to God, too proud to soften his hardened heart toward God.

Then God caused a thick darkness to cover all the land of Egypt for three days. During all that time the people could not see each other so they didn't move about. The darkness was very oppressive. In Goshen, where the Israelites lived, there was light as usual. The Israelites went about their daily life activities as usual.

This time Pharaoh became very angry. His heart was so hard from all the plagues God had sent upon Egypt. He was more determined than ever to not give in to God. In his great anger he ordered Moses, "Get out of here! Never come back to see me again! The day you see my face, you will die!" Moses knew that Pharaoh was very angry and meant what he had said. Moses replied to him, "You are right. I will never see your face again." Then Moses departed from the presence of Pharaoh.

Let's think about this. God is holy and righteous. Each confrontation with Pharaoh and each plague was an opportunity for Pharaoh to turn away from his wicked ways and to believe in God. Surely he could see that God, not he, was in control of everything. Surely he could see how useless it was to fight against God. Surely he could understand that it is better to admit being wrong, to ask for mercy, grace, and forgiveness, than to bear the punishment for unbelief and stubbornness. Though Pharaoh should have come to

understand that it was useless and senseless to fight against God, he didn't. He kept following his wicked ways, the ways of Satan. He remained stubborn and rebellious, just like Satan, as he fought against God. He continued to follow the ways of Satan, the enemy of God. That is very sinful and wicked. Do not be like Pharaoh who resisted and fought against God.

After the nine plagues upon the land of Egypt, God was now ready to deliver the Israelites from Egypt and Pharaoh's rule. He told Moses what he was going to do and how he would deliver the Israelites from Pharaoh. "I will strike Pharaoh and the land of Egypt with one more blow," said God. "Then Pharaoh will be so eager to get rid of you that he will force you all to leave the land of Egypt."

#### **4. The Passover**

God had promised Moses that he was going to take the Israelites out of Egypt and have them return to the land of Canaan, the land which he had promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In preparation for the event, God gave careful instructions to Moses and Aaron for the Israelites to follow so that God would save them from destruction. These instructions had to be followed exactly or they would not be saved from the tenth plague.

After nine plagues had wrecked havoc upon the land of Egypt, Pharaoh still hardened his heart against God and refused to allow the Israelites to leave the land of Egypt. This tenth plague, however, would be so severe that Pharaoh would ask the Israelites to leave. What was God going to do by the tenth plague that would cause a change in Pharaoh's heart?

Would the tenth plague also affect the Israelites? Or, would God protect the Israelites from this plague as he did from the other plagues? Listen carefully so that you will know and understand all that God did to rescue the Israelites from the tenth plague and the land of Egypt.



**Show #27: The first Passover in Egypt**

God spoke to Moses and Aaron and told them what he was going to do to Pharaoh and the Egyptians. He said. "I will strike Pharaoh and the land of Egypt with one more blow.

Then Pharaoh will be so eager to get rid of you that he will force you all to leave.” This tenth judgment would be over all the land of Egypt. Everyone, even the Israelites, would suffer from it unless God made a way of escape for them.

Listen carefully to the instructions for the way of escape from the tenth judgment which God gave to Moses and Aaron. He said, “Each household must choose a lamb or a young goat for a sacrifice. It must be a one-year-old male, either a sheep or a goat, with no defects. Then all of the Israelites must slaughter their lamb or young goat at twilight. They are to take some of the blood and smear it on the sides and top of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the animal. On that same night they must roast the meat over a fire and eat it along with bitter salad greens and bread made without yeast. The whole animal must be roasted over a fire. Burn whatever is not eaten before morning.”

God told Moses and Aaron that the Israelites were to be fully dressed, and ready to leave as they ate the meal with urgency. Why? Because on that night God said that he was going to pass through the land of Egypt and strike down every firstborn, man and animal, in the land of Egypt. He was going to execute judgment against all the gods of Egypt because he alone is the true and living God. God told Moses, “The blood on your doorposts will serve as a sign, marking the houses where you are staying. When I see the blood, I will pass over you. This plague of death will not touch you when I strike the land of Egypt.”

Moses and Aaron told the Israelites about the tenth plague that God was going to bring upon all the land of Egypt. The Israelites prepared for this coming judgment just as God had instructed them in order to be rescued. The Israelite families killed a lamb for each household and applied its shed blood to the doorframes of their houses. They ate this roasted lamb with their shoes on, fully prepared to leave Egypt on a moment’s notice. They followed all of God’s instructions for leaving Egypt. They were ready to go.

At midnight, that night, the LORD struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt. The firstborn of proud Pharaoh, who resisted God all the time, was killed. Everyone’s firstborn from the richest to the poorest, whether



**Show #28: Death of the firstborn in Egypt**

prisoners or free. Even the firstborn of their livestock were killed. Pharaoh and all his officials and all the people of Egypt woke up during the night only to see their firstborn dead. There was loud wailing throughout the land of Egypt. There was not a single house where someone had not died. The tenth plague affected everyone in the land Egypt. The Israelites, however, were spared this judgment because they had applied the blood of their sacrifice upon the doorframes of their houses according to God's command. The Lord saw the blood of their sacrifice applied upon the doorframes of their houses and he passed over them.

Then Pharaoh, reeling with grief, sent for Moses and Aaron during the night and ordered them to leave Egypt. "Get out of here, leave Egypt. Take all of the Israelites with you! Be gone! Go and worship the LORD with your flocks and herds!" All of the Egyptians likewise urged the people of Israel to get out of the land as quickly as possible. They were filled with terror and afraid that they too might die.

As the Israelites were leaving Egypt, they asked the Egyptians for clothing and articles of silver and gold. God caused the Egyptians to show favor to the Israelites and they gave them whatever they asked for. The Israelites received a lot of wealth from the Egyptians as they were leaving. Now Israel was set free from the oppressive rule of proud Pharaoh and the Egyptian rulers.

Let's talk about the meaning of the way the Israelites escaped God's judgment upon Egypt. God had placed a death sentence upon the whole land of Egypt. He was going to kill the firstborn of man and beast in the whole land of Egypt. That means that the firstborn Israelites in the land of Goshen also were going to die. However, coming from the eternal wisdom of God, God gave to the Israelites specific instructions to sacrifice a lamb as a substitute. The lamb had to be a spotless one, a yearling male. It would be sacrificed and its blood painted upon the doorframes.

This story shows us how God provided a substitute for the Israelites. The substitute died in the place of the firstborn of the Israelites. Were the substitute lambs sacrificed because they sinned against God? No, they had not sinned against God. The sacrificed lambs took the place of the firstborn of the Israelites who would have died through the tenth plague had God not provided a way of escape for them.

No Israelite firstborn was saved by his own merits or works. Had the Israelites deviated from God's directions, their firstborn too would have died during the execution of the tenth plague. They were only saved by following God's explicit directions exactly as he had stated.

No one can save himself from the penalty and guilt of being a sinner. The penalty for sin is death. Either a sinner will pay for his own sin by eternal death or a substitute will take his place in death. All people who believe in God's message for us can be saved from the penalty of sin.

Listen carefully: There are two ways to respond to God's message. There are two ways to respond to God. We can only chose one way at one time. A person can submit to God and live. Or, he can harden his heart against God, like Pharaoh did, and suffer the consequences of sin. God wants you to trust him, to believe in him. Which way of responding to God have you chosen? You cannot believe in God and disbelieve him at the same time. God wants everyone to believe in him and be saved from the guilt and penalty of sin.

## **5. Israel Crosses the Red Sea**

The Israelites left Egypt and followed God's leading to the Red Sea by way of the wilderness. As they left, they took with them the bones of Joseph who had died many years ago. God led Israel as they left the land of Egypt and they came to a wilderness area. During the day, he guided them with a pillar of cloud. At night he provided light with a pillar of fire. This allowed the Israelites to travel by day or by night because God did not remove the pillar of cloud or pillar of fire from its place in front of the people. God was faithful to lead them in the right way all the time. God is faithful all the time and he never leads people astray.

After the Israelites had left Egypt, Pharaoh and his officials realized that the Israelites were not intending to return again to Egypt. Now Pharaoh was upset because all of his slave labor was gone! Then Pharaoh harnessed his chariot and took with him six hundred of Egypt's best chariots and other chariots of Egypt, each with its commander. The LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt and he chased hard after the Israelites. They were determined to force them to return to Egypt as slaves again. The Egyptian army with horses, charioteers and troops caught up with Israelites by the shore of the Red Sea.

Pharaoh and his army were determined to force the Israelites to return to Egypt and serve as their slaves again. Who do you think was controlling Pharaoh's mind during this time? Had he not suffered enough when the firstborn of Egypt were killed by God? Had he not experienced defeat time after time as Egypt was devastated by the plagues? Who was influencing Pharaoh to fight against God again? Surely, it was Satan who urged him to continue his fight against God.



As Pharaoh and his army approached the Israelites, they panicked. They could see the army rapidly approaching them. Ahead of them was the Red Sea, behind them was the Egyptian army. What were they to do? They were not trained soldiers and they had no weapons of war. Seeing their helpless situation, they began to complain against Moses, blaming him for their unfortunate circumstance. “Why did you bring us out here to die in the wilderness?” they complained. “It’s better to be a slave in Egypt than a corpse in the wilderness!” they moaned. Already they forgotten that God had shown them mercy and grace and delivered them from the Egyptians.

Moses, the servant of God, trusted God to deliver the Israelites completely from the hands of the Egyptians. He knew that God was sovereign and able to deliver them from any human power. He knew that God was all-powerful and able to overcome the Egyptian army regardless of their military might. In the midst of the Israelites’ doubts, accusations and chaos, Moses said, “Do not be frightened! Just stand still and watch God fight for you. He will rescue you and the Egyptians you see today will never be seen again. Trust God and relax!” Moses said this because he had total confidence in God. He wanted them to understand that God did not mislead them. God is always reliable and never makes a mistake. Moses knew that the Israelites were about to witness the awesome, unparalleled power of God.

As the Israelites were between the Egyptian army and the Red Sea, the angel of God, who had been leading them, moved to the rear of the camp. And, the pillar of cloud moved from the front and stood behind them and settled between the Egyptian and Israelite camps. As darkness fell, the cloud turned to fire and lit up the night and the two sides stayed apart from each other. Then God commanded Moses to raise his staff over the Red Sea.

Moses raised his hand over the sea and a strong east wind blew all night. It made a road of dry land in the midst of the Red Sea. The power of God kept the water divided with a dry road on the bottom of the sea. It was wide enough for all the Israelites to walk safely to the other side. Then the Israelites walked through the middle of the Red Sea on dry ground with walls of water on each side! What an awesome miracle of God. No one was harmed in any way as they walked through the Red Sea on



**Show #29: God made a dry passage way in the Red Sea for the Israelites**

dry land. The Israelites witnessed and experienced the awesome power of God as they walked through the Red Sea on a dry road to the other side.

The Egyptian army saw the Israelites getting away from them as they were walking through the Red Sea. Quickly they went after them into the middle of the sea. They did not think about the fact that they were witnessing God's awesome power of having made a dry road through the Red Sea. They only thought about capturing the Israelites. Hastily, the Egyptian army pursued the Israelites. They were determined to overtake them and force them to return to Egypt again.

Then God threw their forces into total confusion. He twisted their chariot wheels and made it very difficult for their chariots to keep going. The Egyptian army panicked. They knew that the power of God was fighting for Israel and defeating them. They tried to escape but it was forever too late to change their minds about fighting against the Israelites which in reality was fighting against God. God judged them and they failed in their pursuit against the Israelites.

The Israelites kept marching through the Red Sea. When all of them were safely on the other side, the LORD said to Moses, "Raise your hand over the sea again and the waters will rush back and cover the Egyptian army." Moses obeyed God and the walls of water rushed back into their usual place and killed every Egyptian pursuing the Israelites. On that day the Israelites saw the mighty power of God that he exercised against the Egyptians. Not a single person from the Egyptian army survived God's judgment as the Red Sea waters rushed back and covered the dry road which God had made for the Israelites. Not a single Israelite perished as they safely walked through the Red Sea and reached the other side. God won an incredible victory for them.

All of the Israelites saw God's unparalleled power and were filled with awe. Having seen that demonstration of power, they now put their faith in him and in Moses, the servant of God. God wanted the Israelites to think about the way he delivered them from the land of Egypt. He wanted all of them to believe in him. He wanted them to trust him in all situations. He wanted them to know without any doubt that he was the only true and living God. He wanted them to utterly despise the many false gods and deities the Egyptians honored and worshiped.

Think about this story! The Egyptians saw God's power making a dry road through the Red Sea. Right then they should have surrendered to God and turned back from chasing the Israelites. They should have given up. They should have said to each other, "We have been defeated by the Israelites' God. Let us return home."

Why did they keep fighting against God and the Israelites? The Egyptians did not believe

in God so they kept chasing the Israelites. Their minds were controlled by the lust for victory and power over the Israelites. They followed the evil temptation of Satan to just pursue the Israelites. They continued to fight against God which was useless and senseless.

God's power that saved the Israelites destroyed the Egyptians. If you believe God's Word, if you trust him, he will save you from the guilt and penalty of your sins. If you resist God, if you refuse to believe in him, you will die in your sins and be condemned forever as were the unbelieving Egyptians who perished in the Red Sea.

## **6. God Provides Water and Food**

After God led the Israelites through the Red Sea, Moses led them into a wilderness area. They traveled in this area for three days but did not find any good drinking water. The water in that area was too bitter for anyone to drink. Then the Israelites began to complain against Moses. "What are we going to do? We have no water to drink," they complained. Quickly, the Israelites forgot how God had delivered them from the Egyptians.

Why did Moses lead them to the wilderness area? Moses only led them as the Lord directed him so he cried out to the LORD for help. God heard his cry for help and showed him a piece of wood to use to make the water good for drinking. Moses obeyed God, got the wood and threw it into the water. Now the Israelites had water which was fit to drink.

Then God instructed the Israelites that they were to obey him all the time. He said, "If you will listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his sight, obeying his commands and keeping all his decrees, then I will not make you suffer any of the diseases I sent on the Egyptians; for I am the LORD who heals you." God cared deeply for the Israelites. He wanted them to serve and worship him. He wanted to use them to be the means for bringing the Deliverer to mankind.

The Israelites continued their journey through the wilderness going toward Mt. Sinai. Then they started to grumble against Moses and Aaron again because they did not have much food to eat. The Israelites soon forgot about God's awesome powerful act of delivering them from Egypt and the parting of the Red Sea waters. They were so caught up with their circumstances that they forgot about God who is all-powerful and faithful. They thought only about their needs, not the awesome and most powerful God who delivered them from Egypt.

The Israelites gripped and complained about their living conditions in the wilderness. Their hearts were filled with ingratitude. They said, "In Egypt we sat around pots filled with meat and ate all the bread we wanted. But now you have brought us into this



wilderness to starve us all to death.” These accusations, though stated to Moses and Aaron, were against God. They were false accusations! Surely, they knew better than to falsely accuse God of failing them. It is a serious thing to accuse God of failure.

God is faithful, longsuffering and he intended to provide for the Israelites. He said to Moses, “I’m going to rain down bread from heaven for you. Each day the people can go out and pick up as much food as they need for that day. On the sixth day they will gather food, and when they prepare it, there will be twice as much as usual.”

Moses and Aaron told all the Israelites that God was going to provide plenty of food for them every morning and evening. Every morning God gave them bread to eat. Each person was to gather as much as they needed for each day. There was plenty of bread for everyone. However, no one was to gather more bread than they needed for a day because it would spoil with a foul smell. In the evening, God caused quail to fly to the camp area which provided meat for them.

God showed mercy and grace to the Israelites. He provided for their daily food requirements by providing bread and meat which they could freely eat. God wanted them to know that he was their provider, and that he cared for their physical welfare. Was it difficult for God to provide bread and quail for the Israelites? No, it was not difficult for God, the creator of all things, to provide bread and quail for the Israelites. As creator of all things, he had the power to provide food for the Israelites. They should have bowed to worship God, their creator, for his bountiful provisions. God wanted the Israelites to love him and worship him for his mercy, grace, and goodness to them.

The Israelites, however, had ungrateful attitudes and they complained to Moses and Aaron about their living conditions in the wilderness. Moses and Aaron warned the people about the wrongness of complaining against them. “Your complaints are against God, not against us,” warned Moses. He wanted them to quit complaining against God because God is holy, righteous, and faithful. Moses knew that God would not abandon his chosen people. He knew that God would lead them in right ways and take care of their every need. The



Show #31: God told Moses to strike the rock and He made water flow from it

Israelites had witnessed God's awesome power on their behalf. There was no reason for them to doubt God and to complain against God. God deserved to be praised and worshiped for his greatness and goodness to the Israelites. Had the Israelites thought about God's incredible goodness to them, they would not have complained against him.

Think about this. It was wrong for the Israelites to complain against God because all his ways are right. He makes no mistakes. To complain against God was to accuse him of wrongdoing, of making wrong choices for them. The Israelites sinned when they complained against God. Will holy, righteous God ignore their complaints against him? Or, will he deal justly with them? Though God is long-suffering, he cannot ignore false accusations which defame his holy character.

The Israelites continued their journey in the wilderness and came to a place where there was no water. This time the people quarreled with Moses and said. "Where's our drinking water? We're going to die!" They were very upset with Moses. They did not heed his warning about their complaints being against God. "Why did you bring us out here from Egypt? You want to kill us and our livestock with thirst, don't you?" The Israelites were really angry at Moses. They forgot that God was leading Moses. Moses was not acting independently from God as he led them through the wilderness.

Moses cried out to the LORD for help and God said to him. "Walk out in front of the people with some of the Israelite elders. Take your staff that you used to strike the Nile River. I will stand before you on the rock at Mount Sinai. Strike the rock, and water will come gushing out of it and the people will be able to drink." Moses obeyed God and struck the rock. Then water gushed out of it as the elders looked on. God, who created all things including the rock which Moses struck, made water flow from it. By his unequalled power, he made an abundant supply of water flow from a hard rock. As creator, he controls his creation according to his will and by his power.

The Israelites quickly forgot about God's mercy and goodness shown to them by delivering them from slavery in Egypt. They quickly forgot how they had suffered at the hands of merciless Egyptian taskmasters. They lusted for the Egyptian food so much that they forgot to honor and worship God. They showed ingratitude toward God all the time. Their example of ingratitude is one that God does not want anyone to follow. God wants you to think about his unequalled greatness. Everything he does is good. He wants you to submit to him and believe in him all the time. He alone is worthy of our devotion. Why did the Israelites gripe so much against Moses and Aaron? The Israelites were more concerned about their physical lives than God's purpose for them. They quickly forgot about God's goodness to them. In many ways they acted like Esau who lived for himself and for the moment. Esau traded his birthright for a bowl of stew. The Israelites lusted for

Egypt and its food. How could they forget their bondage in Egypt? How could they so quickly forget about their deliverance from Egypt by the goodness of God?

Let the bad example of the Israelites' unbelief be a warning to you. Do you believe in God? Are you believing God's entire message? Or, do you still hold on to old beliefs which are wearisome and burdensome? Remember, disbelieve God and you will pay the penalty for your sins and guilt. Trust God, believe his message for you and he will be merciful to you. Which choice are you making today? To be like ungrateful Israel and forget about God? Or do you believe in God and what the Bible teaches because it is his message for us?

## **7. After the Meeting**

**Setting:** God's mighty act of delivering Israel from Egypt impressed everyone. Greg and Raymond were talking about everything that they learned in this story.

**Greg:** When the Israelites were in slavery in Egypt, who could rescue them so that they would be free from Egypt? Only God could help them and he did. He rescued them while at the same time judging Egypt. Egypt suffered many hardships because Pharaoh resisted God. He fought against God all the time.

**Raymond:** That's true. God made a way of escape from the tenth plague and I thought a lot about it because it relates to us. God said all firstborn in Egypt will die. We too are going to die because we are sinners. God provided a substitute for the Israelites and passed over them. He did not kill the firstborn of any family who had applied the blood of the sacrificed lamb on their doorframes. God provided the substitute and the Israelites lived. The Egyptians died because they did not believe in God. They were wicked followers of Satan.

**Greg:** The Egyptians worshiped their own false gods. The God we are learning about is the only true and living God. I need his mercy and grace. I need God to save me from the penalty of my sin like he saved the Israelites from their Egyptian bondage.

**Raymond:** When God killed the firstborn of the Egyptians, they felt the pain of this judgment. When one of our children dies, we cry a lot because we too feel the pain.

**Greg:** The Egyptians soon forgot the pain of God's judgment because they were fighting so hard against God. When Pharaoh and his army went after the Israelites, I thought to myself, "How unreasonable are they? Surely they know that God is more powerful than any person or army."

**Raymond:** Who among us has ever heard of a deity who has the power to divide a sea and make a dry road in the middle of it? Only God can do this. These Bible stories show that God is unequalled in every way. He alone is the only true and living God.

**Greg:** Since God is the only true and living God, he alone can help us with our sin problem. I desperately want God to save me from my sin like he saved the Israelites from being in bondage to Egypt. I need his mercy and grace.

**Raymond:** Once the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, they soon forgot about God's mercy to them. Soon they griped about being without food and water. If we do not keep discussing these Bible stories, we too will forget about God's greatness and goodness.

**Greg:** All of these Bible stories teach us that our only hope to be saved from the penalty of our sin is God. He alone can help us. I believe all that Teacher is teaching us from the Bible. It is the truth we have always needed to hear.

## 8. Review of the Lesson's Themes

**God is faithful, he never changes:** God chose Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt to return to the land of Canaan which he had promised to Abraham and his descendants. Although many years had passed since God promised the land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendants, God did not forget his promise. He is always faithful to do what he said he would do.

**God communicates with man:** God spoke to Moses and Aaron and told them how he was going to deliver the Israelites from the land of Egypt. God told Moses and Aaron to appear to Pharaoh and tell him what he was going to do. God disclosed his plans to Moses and Aaron which they told to Pharaoh because God wanted Pharaoh to make right choices. Every time that Moses and Aaron warned Pharaoh about God's judgment, it was an opportunity for Pharaoh to repent and submit to God.

**Satan fights against God:** Satan is the enemy of God. He works through people who do not worship God. His influence among Pharaoh and the Egyptian rulers is evident as they responded in defiance and arrogance toward God even though they suffered very much from the plagues. Though Satan tries hard to overpower God, to be greater than God, he cannot usurp the sovereignty and supremacy of God over everything.

**Man is a helpless sinner who needs God's mercy and grace to save him from sins' guilt and penalty:** The Israelites were slaves in Egypt and helpless to deliver themselves from their bondage. In the same way people are naturally sinners, in bondage to their sinful nature, and helpless to deliver themselves from the guilt and penalty of their sins. Just as God showed mercy and grace to the Israelites, people need God's mercy and grace shown to them so that they likewise can respond in faith to him and be saved from the guilt and penalty of their sins. Without God's mercy and grace, there is no way for anyone to be reconciled to God and be forgiven of their sins.

**God demands death for sin's payment. He provides a way of escape for those who believe in him:** The payment for sin is death. God does not accept any human way for people to be reconciled to him and forgiven of their sins. How can a sinner be reconciled to God? God has provided a way whereby people can be put into a right relationship with him. It is necessary to believe in God and his way for reconciliation in order to be forgiven of our debt and guilt of sin.

**The Passover type is presented:** Later, this type will be used in the gospel presentation. At this point the Passover is explained as God's provision for the Israelites to save them from the sentence of death which was placed upon the whole land of Egypt by God.

**Man must have faith in God:** God requires people to believe in him in order to be accepted by him. It is not enough to merely know about God. God requires that people believe in him and trust in the way he has provided for people to be made right with him.

**God is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent:** The story about God working to deliver the Israelites from their Egyptian bondage shows that he is unequaled in every way. This story should overwhelm the audience with the fact that God knows everything, even before events happen. He is everywhere present and sees all that happens and that people are doing in every location. He has the power to work among the affairs of mankind in such a way to achieve his purpose. Though Pharaoh and the Egyptians were the most powerful people on earth, they were no contest for the awesome power of God as he executed his judgment upon them and delivered them safely through the Red Sea.

**God is long-suffering, merciful, and shows favor to people:** In the wilderness, on the other side of the Red Sea, the Israelites soon forgot about God's awesome work of deliverance. They showed their ingratitude by complaining about their physical circumstances in the wilderness. Though they did not deserve it, God was long-suffering, and merciful to them. He showed grace upon grace to them by providing for their physical needs so they had plenty of food and drinking water. God did these good things for the Israelites because through them he would send the coming Deliverer who would save people from their guilt and penalty of their sins.

## **9. Students Practice Telling the Stories**

At the end of this lesson, practice telling the story you have just heard to each other. Everyone needs to practice teaching Bible lessons by telling the stories. By now you should have a feel for how to make the stories interesting according to your cultural ways of storytelling. Be sure to maintain the right focus in each story. Focus on God being the primary one who worked in history in these stories.

Practice telling the stories of this lesson in pairs. One pair should teach one of the stories in the lesson following this lesson's Table of Contents for divisions in the lessons.

The Table of Contents at the beginning of the lesson lists the stories for each lesson. Some of the stories or sections of a story are short so they should be combined with another section to make the exercise of practicing to teach by using stories a profitable exercise.

When you are teaching a lesson by telling the story, use culturally appropriate questions and illustrations to keep the story interesting and to make the people think about the lesson's meanings. Be prepared to engage the audience with questions which are crafted to bring out how well they understand the meaning of the story.

Use visual aids or objects used in the lesson when you teach a story. Show the pictures at the right time in the story. When illustrations are used, be sure to bring them to a right and logical conclusion. If you do not make the right conclusions through telling the story, people will likely guess what it means and they could easily come to a wrong conclusion.

After you have practiced telling stories to each other, talk about ways to improve your story-telling ability. Be open to critique and be kind to each other as you work together to help each other become master story-tellers. The goal of teaching God's Word via telling Bible stories is not to merely impress your peers; it is the salvation of spiritually lost people.

Self-evaluation: As you tell the stories, how well you present the stories and the themes? Does your teaching tend to highlight people? Or does it rightfully focus on God working in history? Do you tell the story so that God is highlighted throughout the story? Or is man, in a subtle way, the main actor in the story? You need to make sure that the role of God in these stories is the main focus. People are the instruments through whom God achieves his purposes.

**10. Teaching Tips for Teachers**

**Lesson Point #2:**

Emphasize that God gave opportunity to Pharaoh to repent of his wickedness and to believe in him. Every time there was a confrontation between Pharaoh and God, God overruled Pharaoh's resistance and demonstrated his sovereignty in the affairs of man.

Stress that God wanted Pharaoh to respond to him in a reasonable way. That means after having seen God's awesome power in the judgments or plagues upon the land of Egypt, Pharaoh should have humbled himself and submitted to God and asked him for mercy.

God judged the Egyptians according to his righteousness. Stress that God was not unfair to them. Emphasize that these judgments were physical and understandable evidence of the greatness of God. Anyone who saw what happened should have concluded that they needed God's mercy and grace in order to avert judgment.

**Lesson Point #3:**

In this section, the account of the original Passover feast among the Israelites is taught. Stress that God had said every firstborn in the land of Egypt was going to die. This judgment was upon all firstborn whether they were Egyptians or Israelites. Once again the story highlights the inability of mankind to do anything to save himself from God's judgment, from having to pay the penalty of being a sinner,

Explain that the whole Passover feast was according to the plan of God. Explain each step of the Passover in a simple yet accurate way emphasizing that this was God's provision for the Israelites to escape God's judgment upon the whole land of Egypt.

As this is explained to the people focus on God's mercy, and his grace shown to the Israelites. Emphasize that every step of the Passover feast had to be done exactly as God had instructed them. Explain that God would have rejected any variation of the observation of this Passover feast.

Emphasize that the Lord did not strike the firstborn who were with in a house where the blood of the sacrificed Lamb had been applied to the doorframes. The Lord passed over every house where the blood of the sacrificed Lamb had been applied to the doorframes according to his instructions. In that way God provided a way of escape for the firstborn of the Israelites. The death of the Lamb and its shed blood was the substitute for the death of the firstborn.



Emphasize that the Israelites experienced the awesome and undeserved mercy and grace of God while the Egyptians experienced the wrath of God in judgment upon their firstborn.

Emphasize that the Israelites were delivered by God's way. The Egyptians however did not observe the Passover which means they did not sacrifice a firstborn lamb. They did not apply the blood of a sacrificed Lamb to their doorframes. They had no acceptable substitute to pay for the death of the firstborn and so their firstborn were killed.

Point out that the Egyptians faith in their false deities was of no avail. All the firstborn among the Egyptians whether man or beast were struck down by the Lord because they had no God-accepted substitute.

**Lesson Point #4:**

God made a dry road in the middle of the Red Sea for the Israelites to walk upon and safely arrive on the other side. Emphasize that God was able to make a dry road in the middle of this mass of water because he is the creator and owner of everything.

Point out that God's demonstration of power was evident to the Egyptians likewise. Because they did not believe in God, they did not think clearly about the fact that it was the miraculous power of God which made a road in the middle of the Red Sea. They should have been afraid to chase after the Israelites whom they witnessed were being delivered by their God.

Emphasize the awesome power and the faithfulness of God as he worked according to his mercy and grace to ensure the Israelites escape from Egypt and safe arrival on the other side of the Red Sea.

Emphasize the futility of resisting God and fighting against him. Exhort, reason, and persuade anyone in the audience who is resisting submitting to the truth of God's word. Highlight the calamity that engulfed the Egyptians as they chased after the Israelites in the middle of the Red Sea and then were destroyed by the waters as they returned to normalcy.

Encourage the people to believe in God and repent of any resistance to this teaching. The same God, who judged Pharaoh and the Egyptians who refused to bow their hearts to him, will also judge them for not believing and trusting in him.

**Lesson Point #5:**

This part of the lesson shows how the Israelites quickly forgot about awesome God. When their food and water supply was very low they failed to think about God's greatness. They focused on their physical circumstances.

Warn the people you are teaching about the wrongness of forgetting about God. Exhort them to keep on thinking about the meaning of these Bible lessons.

The way that the Israelites quickly forgot about God's greatness is the way people normally respond to the work of God in their lives. However, this is not right. God wants people to remember all his great works so that their faith in him will be strengthened. Exhort the people to talk among themselves about these Bible stories and keep them fresh in their minds. Otherwise, they too will forget about God and only think about themselves.

**11. To the Honorable Teacher**

If any part of this lesson is misunderstood, go over that part again. Play that part of the lesson again. Summarize that part briefly for the students then play that part a second time. Then ask questions to ascertain whether or not this part of the lesson is now understood correctly.

Be prepared to use proper illustrations to clarify a given lesson point. Sometimes it is helpful to use a picture and talk about what is portrayed in the picture as you teach.

Stress to the students that the important themes of this lesson must be understood before proceeding to the next lesson. By interacting with people and discussing the teaching it is possible to ascertain how people are understanding the lessons and whether or not they are believing the teaching.

Simple drama can be useful to make a point clearer in the people's minds. Before using drama, be sure that it is culturally appropriate to do so. If people are not accustomed to understanding simple drama, it may be best to not use it.