

14. Rescuer



BIBLE STORY / REFERENCE

Exodus 14

God parts the Red Sea for Moses and the Israelites to escape from the Egyptians.



AIMS

To help the children reflect on the story of the Israelites crossing the Red Sea and to consider what it reveals to us about God

God has amazing power to rescue, even in situations where it seems impossible. Like the Israelites, we can ask God for help when we need it.



PREP FOR LEADERS

Read through the Bible passage for this session and reflect:

- What do you think it would have been like for the Israelites to witness God's rescue in this way?
 - What does this passage teach us about God?
- Take some time to pray for your group.



GAMES / INTRO ACTIVITIES

Choose one of the following activities to introduce today's theme:

▶ Freeze Tig

Depending on the size of your group, choose either one or two children to be the chaser(s). The other children run away from them, trying to avoid being caught. If they are caught, they have to freeze in position. They can only be "rescued" and unfrozen by another player who is not frozen tapping them as they run past.

▶ Rescue The Jelly Babies

You will need: two bowls of jelly containing jelly babies (prepared in advance), newspaper or cover for table,

baby wipes and paper towels to clean up

Choose two children to take part in a challenge. You will need two bowls of jelly with some jelly babies in them, made up in advance. Get the children to try to "rescue" the jelly babies by picking them out of the jelly with their teeth. See which child can be the first to rescue all their jelly babies.

▶ Sharks and Lifeguards

You will need: a parachute (you could ask if either the school or your church has one you could borrow)

Have all the children sitting round the parachute with their legs straight out underneath. Choose one child to be the shark and one to be the lifeguard. The shark goes under the parachute and the lifeguard stands up at the side.

When the game begins, get

(continued overleaf)

the children sitting round the parachute to shake it to make waves. The shark pulls on someone's legs, trying to bring them under the parachute too. When a child feels the shark pulling on their legs, they can call for the lifeguard to come and help them by attempting to pull them back out and prevent them from being pulled under the parachute. If a child is pulled under by a shark, they become a shark too. Once several children have become sharks, you can stop the game and choose a new shark and a new lifeguard to begin the next round.



▶ Recap

Remind the children of the story of Moses so far - his call from God at the burning bush and the challenge of persuading Pharaoh to let the Israelites go free. Last week we heard how God sent ten plagues before Pharaoh agreed to let the Israelites leave Egypt. Today we're going to find out what happened after that.

Choose one of the following three methods to help the children explore today's story:

▶ Red Sea Drama

You will need: headdresses and printed words as detailed below, staff for Moses, 2 swords, 2 blue sheets or towels, gold coloured throw (optional)

Choose children to play the different characters and give them props as follows:

Pharaoh - headdress (you can find instructions to help you make one here: bit.ly/2z3Cv1P), words to say (see additional document: words for Pharaoh and Israelites)

Moses - headdress (can be a tea

towel tied on with a cord) and staff

Aaron - headdress

2 Israelites - words to say (see additional document: words for Pharaoh and Israelites)

2 Egyptians - swords

The rest of the children can be the other Israelites.

Have Pharaoh sitting on a "throne" at one side of the room with the two Egyptians guarding him on either side. (The throne can simply be a chair, or you could make it look more special by draping a gold coloured throw over it.) Have Moses, Aaron and all the other Israelites at the opposite side of the room.

Later in the story you will need two blue sheets or towels to represent the Red Sea.

Encourage the children to act the story out as you tell it.

After the last plague, Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron. (Moses goes over to where Pharaoh is sitting on his throne.)

Pharaoh: **"Get out and take all your people with you."**

At last Moses and the rest of the Israelites could leave Egypt. They got everything ready and set off. God led them on their way by putting a pillar of cloud in the sky to guide them during the day and a pillar of fire to lead them at night.

After the Israelites had travelled for a bit, God told them to stop for the night and set up camp so they did. They settled down to sleep.

Meanwhile back in Egypt, Pharaoh was having second thoughts.

Pharaoh: **"What have I done? Why did I let all my slaves go? We must go after them and bring them back."**

So Pharaoh got his army together and they set out after the Israelites to bring them back.

(Pharaoh and the Egyptians go after the Israelites.)

When the Israelites saw the Egyptians in the distance, they panicked.

(The Israelites get up to go on their way. Place blue cloths/towels on the floor to represent the Red Sea blocking their way.)

They had just reached the edge of the Red Sea and there was no other way for them to escape. They started to complain to God and to Moses.

Israelite 1: **"Why did you bring us out of Egypt just to die?"**

Israelite 2: **"It would be better to be a slave there than to die here."**

Moses said, "Don't be afraid. Just watch. God will fight for you. He will rescue you."

Then God told Moses to take his staff and to raise it over the sea to divide the water so the Israelites could walk through on dry ground. Moses did and God opened up a path through the sea.

(With a helper, lift up blue cloths to form walls of water. You could direct a child to help you if you don't have another adult there.)

The Israelites all walked safely through.

The Egyptians chased them into the middle of the sea but God confused the Egyptian forces and made their chariots difficult to drive. When all the Israelites had reached the other side, God told Moses to raise his hand over the sea again and he did. Immediately the water flooded over the Egyptians and not one of them survived.

(Throw blue cloths over the Egyptians.)

The Israelites were amazed and they put their trust in both God and Moses.

Collect in the props and costumes and get the children to sit down.

▶ Video

You will need: equipment to play video

If you prefer not to use a drama to tell the story, you could use a video clip as an alternative.

This video: youtu.be/3MyUo8715TE provides a simple animated version of the story.

This one: vimeo.com/176635067 uses a storyteller and, as well as telling the story of the crossing of the Red Sea, it also recaps the story of the plagues.

▶ Story with images

You will need: images either printed or on PowerPoint

You can find a set of images to illustrate the story here: freebibleimages.org/illustrations/moses-red-sea

If you download the document entitled "Story planner" you will find a suggested script to use along with each picture to tell the story.



REFLECT & RESPOND

▶ Reflection

Get the children to imagine that they are one of the Israelite people: they had been slaves for a long time, they'd been praying to God but it seemed like he wasn't answering, then Moses came and said he was

going to lead them to freedom, but Pharaoh said no. Then there was a long time while the plagues were happening when they had to wait. At last they were allowed to go, but then the Egyptians chased them again. Finally they witnessed the parting of the Red Sea and God's amazing rescue.

How do you think you would feel about God?

What do you think you would have learned through all of this?

The Bible says two things about the Israelites' reaction (Exodus 14:31): they were filled with awe (amazed at God's power) and they put their faith in God (they had seen how he had power to rescue them so they decided they were going to follow him).

Christians believe that God is still the same today. He still rescues people and he can still do amazing things. Christians believe that the most amazing rescue is that God sent Jesus to rescue people from sin and to deal with all the wrong things in the world. We'll think more about that around Easter time.

▶ Craft activity

You will need: brown or grey card, blue card, scissors, glue sticks, felt pens, Moses figures and Bible verses (from additional documents detailed below)

Give each child a rectangular piece of brown or grey card and two pieces of blue card with waves cut along one edge of each. (For templates, see additional document: *Red Sea Templates*.) Get them to fold a thin strip along the edge opposite the wavy edge on each piece of blue card and then to glue these and stick them to each side of the brown/grey piece of card so that the blue pieces overlap and can fold

back, allowing the sea to open.

Give them a Moses figure (see additional document: *Moses*) and let them colour this and stick it on to the blue card. Also give them a copy of Exodus 14:13 (see additional document: *Red Sea Craft Bible verses*) to stick on.

Give them a copy of Exodus 14:31 (see additional document: *Red Sea Craft Bible verses*) to stick inside along the path through the sea. They can also draw figures to represent the Israelites praising God.

Images of a finished version of this craft are included in the additional document: *Red Sea Craft*.

▶ Prayer

Lead the children in prayer, thanking God for his power to rescue. You could incorporate some of the thoughts they shared in the reflection time.