



God Saves the People

(based on Exodus 12:31-42)

Long ago, the Hebrew people lived as slaves in Egypt. Pharaoh, the ruler of the land, made them work very hard. The people cried out to God for help.

I AM WHO I AM—their God—heard their prayers. I AM sent Moses to lead the people out of Egypt. Moses went to the palace many times to ask Pharaoh to let them go. Every time, Pharaoh said no. He didn't want to lose his slaves.

Finally, I AM told Moses to prepare the Israelites:

“Ask your Egyptian neighbors for gold, silver, and clothes,” I AM instructed. “You will need them for the journey.”

So the people went to their neighbors and gathered everything they needed.

I AM called the people to remember the day they left slavery behind. The Lord God told them to celebrate with a special meal:

“Take a lamb or goat. Roast the animal and cook a meal to remember. Eat bitter herbs to remember how bitter your slavery was. Eat bread made without yeast to remember that your bread had no time to rise before your long journey.”

Pharaoh sent for Moses. The Egyptian king was furious! “I've changed my mind! Get out of my sight, Moses, you and all your people! Pack up your belongings and leave right now!”

Moses ran back to tell the people. It was time. Finally, after all these years, they could leave.

There was so much to do. Everything had to be packed up in a hurry. Everyone helped. Moms and dads, boys and girls, aunts and uncles, grandmas and grandpas, all helped.

Some readied the animals. Some made bread dough and wrapped it in cloth. There was no time to lose, so they took the bread before it could rise. Others packed up the gold, silver, and clothes. They loaded pots, knives, and sleeping mats onto oxen.

Moses started walking through the streets, and the people followed. As they walked, more and more people joined. Soon thousands and thousands of people were following Moses. They had worked together, and now they were free.

The people gave thanks to God because God had helped them. It would be a long journey, but they knew that I AM, the Lord God, would be with them every step of the way.



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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- Wonder: What do you think about this story? What parts did you like? Why? What parts didn't you like? Why?
- The event described in today's biblical story is still celebrated annually by people who are Jewish. It is known as Passover. God gave detailed instructions to the people through Moses on how to prepare for the first Passover and how to celebrate it every year thereafter. *Pesach*, the Hebrew word for Passover, means not only "to pass over," but also "to have compassion" and "to protect." Reflect on ways God showed compassion for the people in the story.



Responding to God's Grace

- Make unleavened bread with these ingredients:
 - 3 cups flour
 - 6 tablespoons soft butter
 - 1 cup milk
 - 1 egg, beaten
 - ½ teaspoon salt

Mix all ingredients to form a ball and knead it on a floured surface. If the dough is too moist, add flour. Give each child a piece and, using a rolling pin, roll it out like a thick pie crust. Bake at 425 degrees for 20 minutes. The dough can also be rolled out in one piece and cut into bread sticks.
- Before eating the bread, say a prayer thanking God for food. While eating the bread, discuss how Moses and his people ate bread like this when God set them free from slavery. Wonder how this bread is different from the bread you usually eat. Enjoy the bread and remember the story of God's salvation.

Celebrating in Gratitude

- Create a freedom prayer together. Write "Thank you, God, for guiding people to freedom. We remember . . ." on paper. Complete the statement by listing people God has guided in the past. Include people from today's Bible story and from our world. Next, brainstorm the names of individuals and groups that are longing for freedom in our world today. Add these to your list. Print "Amen" at the bottom of the sheet. Pray together.
- Pray this prayer during the week:

Thank you, God, for taking care of Moses and his people; thank you, God, for taking care of me; thank you, God, for caring of [ask each person to say his or her name when you point to them]. Amen.