

Aim of lesson

To show that the method God uses to deliver his people is designed to affect the character and attitudes of the people involved.

Bible background

Exodus 4:28 – 12:36.

Outline of lesson

Let my people go

Ask the class who they think is the most powerful person in the world today. Then ask how they would feel if they had to go to that person and tell him what to do. Ask them to imagine how Moses must have felt having to go before Pharaoh (who considered himself a god!) and tell him that God wanted him to let his slaves go off on holiday.

Take the class to Exodus 5. Read verses 1-9, and 19-23, giving different members of the class the parts of Moses, Pharaoh and the officers of the Israelites. Discuss with the class how Moses and the leaders of Israel must have felt at this time. Using Exodus 7:1-5, show how God encourages Moses, warns him again that Pharaoh will not listen and explain some of his purpose in bringing a series of plagues in Egypt. (See also Exodus 9:13-16).

Plagues

Work through the first section in the workbook together, asking the class to use their imagination to think about what each plague must have been like.

Depending on the time available and the size of your class, you may like to divide them into three and ask each group to discuss and complete one of the workbook sections on 'Pharaoh and the Egyptians', 'Moses' or 'The Israelites'. Group 1 should discover that first the magicians, then Pharaoh's servants and lastly Pharaoh himself, had to realise that the hand of God was at work. Guide group 2 to consider whether this experience prepared Moses to be a better leader of the people; and group 3 to consider whether it prepared the people to be more ready to accept him as their leader.

Have each group report back to the whole class, and in discussion compare the way the different people changed.

Digging deeper

Egyptian gods

The plagues demonstrated that many of the Egyptian gods were powerless. God said 'For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD'. (Exodus 12:12 ESV)

Relevance to our lives

Ask each member of the class to write down privately the way in which they think God would most like them to change in their character or attitude. Include yourself in this exercise. Suggest that without discussing what they have written, all of you will include a prayer for God to help you make that change. Suggest they say the prayer each night of the following week. Next week ask if they remembered to do this and if they think that they have been helped to change. Do not ask them to reveal what they have written although they may volunteer the information. Since you have opened up a very private area of their lives be prepared for the subject to crop up in their private conversation with you.

Prayer

Dear Lord our God, please help us to trust in your power to deliver us from sin; and help us to change our attitudes to become more like your Son, our Lord Jesus.

Other suggestions for activities

- A large mural depicting the ten plagues could be built up by the class.
- Many sections of the narrative are suitable for acting, e.g. Exodus 4:29 – 6:12 or chapter 10.