

.....The Plagues on Egypt.....

Children will learn that God protects his people.

Key Scriptures

- Exodus 7:14–12:42
- Psalm 46:1



For the Leader

Unfortunately, even at a young age, children know what it's like to feel picked on, whether it's having a friend who won't share a toy or being mocked by a bully. These experiences create frustration and anger in young children. Since preschoolers and young elementary-age children haven't yet developed strong skills in expressing feelings and negotiating conflict, they're often dependent on parents and teachers to intervene and protect them from the various injustices they experience.

Based on these realities, most children will relate to the story of God standing up to Pharaoh and protecting his children. They'll discover that God was unwilling to sit idly by and watch his children suffer at the hand of their slave masters.

As you introduce children to this narrative, you're introducing them to a God who is equally interested in being their loving protector. You'll give them the security of knowing God will stand up for them, also.

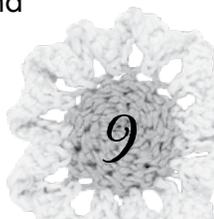
Bible Time: The Plagues on Egypt

Say: **I want to know if any of you ever had someone be bossy with you or pick on you. Raise your hand if anyone has ever been mean to you and bossed you around.** Ask:

- **How did you feel when that happened?**
- **Who do you ask for help when you're being picked on?**
- **Why do you think these people help you?**

The Bible tells us how God's people were being bullied by an evil king called the Pharaoh. He made God's people do hard jobs for him and treated them badly and hurt them. Whenever you hear me say "Pharaoh," I want you to make a "thumbs-down" sign and boo. Let's try that: *Pharaoh*.

Make a thumbs-down sign and boo along with the kids to make sure they understand what they're supposed to do at that cue.



Praise children for this, and then tell them you're going to share a story from the Bible. As you tell the story, be sure to give kids time to give a thumbs-down and boo whenever you say *Pharaoh*.

The Bible says that God's people cried out for help, and their cry rose up to God. God heard their groaning. God protects his people, so he sent a man named Moses to tell *Pharaoh* to let God's people go.

***Pharaoh* said "no," so God had Moses change the water in the river into blood to scare *Pharaoh*. Let me see what your face would look like if you went to get a drink of water and found out the water wasn't clear but was blood red.** Pause to see kids show the faces they would make. **But the king would still not stop being cruel to God's people.**

So God created lots and lots of frogs to hop around and bother *Pharaoh*. Let me see you hop around like a frog and make frog noises. Wait for children to do this.

But still *Pharaoh* would not let God's people go. So God sent lots of little bugs and flies to bother him. Can you buzz around like a fly? Wait for children to do this. Tease them that you might have to get out a flyswatter!

Do you think *Pharaoh* let God's people go then? No, he didn't. So God sent more warnings. He made the skin of *Pharaoh* and his people blister and itch. Pretend you are itchy and scratch your arms. Wait for children to do this.

Moses asked *Pharaoh* if he was ready to let God's people go, but still the king refused. God protects his people, so he

sent stronger warnings. God sent thunder and hail that hurt the plants on *Pharaoh's* farms. Show the children how to make the sound of a loud storm by slapping the palms of their hands on their legs.

Next, God made the sky dark so *Pharaoh* and his people couldn't see where they were going. Have the children cover their hands over their eyes. **But still, the bad king wouldn't stop picking on God's people.**

God loved his people just like they were his children. So he sent one last warning to *Pharaoh*. This one was worse than all the others because God caused a lot of people who followed *Pharaoh* to die. Finally, the bad king agreed to stop being mean to God's people. We can see that God did a lot to protect his people! Ask:

- God used Moses to protect his people. What people does God use to help protect you?



Game: Protect the People

Supplies:

- several stuffed animals
- bed pillows and throw pillows
- a few soft indoor balls

Prep: Set the stuffed animals on the floor.

Say: **Let's play a fun game to remind us that God protects his people. I want you to protect these animals from a ball I'm going to roll at them.** Set the pillows out, and encourage the children to arrange them into a wall to shield the animals. After giving them a few minutes to work together, have them sit to one side. Roll the balls into the pillow "fort"—like bowling!

Good job! You protected the animals from the ball, just like God protects his people. In our Bible story, God protected his people by warning Pharaoh that he needed to stop being mean to them...or else! Ask:

- **Why do you think God protects his people?**

You can repeat this game if you have more time. Allow the children to take turns being the protective wall builders, and allow others to roll the balls against the wall. Be mindful that if younger children get excited, they'll be tempted to throw the ball instead of rolling it. Caution them that if the ball gets thrown, you'll be the only person allowed to roll it.



Craft: A Fort of Protection

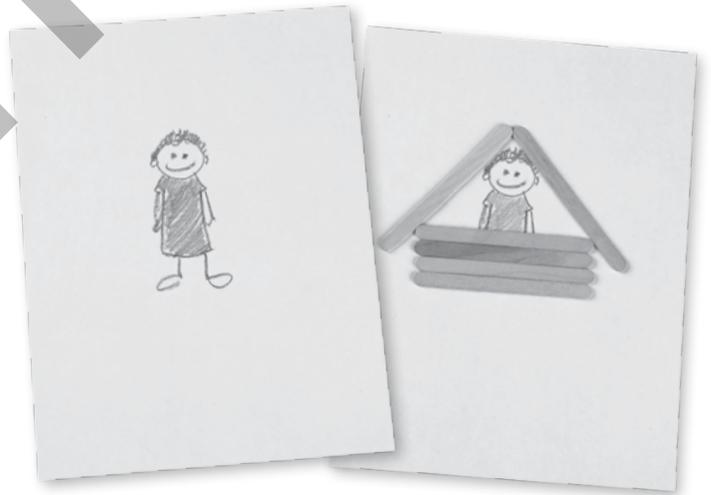
Supplies:

- Bible
- construction paper

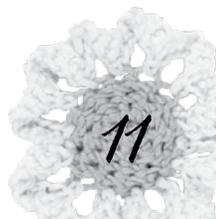
- crayons
- pencils
- craft sticks
- glue or Glue Dots

Say: **The Bible tells us in Psalm 46:1, "God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble." A refuge is like a fort that keeps people safe, just like the wall of pillows kept the stuffed animals safe from the ball. God is like a fort that protects his people.**

Give children each a piece of construction paper, and have them draw a picture of themselves in the center of the page. Pass out craft sticks and glue, and show the children how to arrange the sticks into a fort in front of their picture. If your room has a white board, write: "God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble."—Psalm 46:1.



Encourage the older children to copy the verse on their page. Older kids can write this on the page for younger children, or you can do this if needed. If you have time and craft supplies, such as raffia, yarn, or craft eyes, allow the children to enhance their pictures by adding texture



to the hair and eyes on their drawings.
Ask:

- **Have you ever made a fort— even out of blankets and pillows? What’s fun about being in a fort?**
- **Why do you think the Bible says God is like a fort?**
- **Do you remember a time when God protected you? What happened? How did you feel?**



Prayer: Confidence in Our Strong Refuge

Supplies:

- pillows used in the game

Gather the children on the floor in a circle and say: **Let’s thank God for all the ways he protects us. I’ll start a prayer, and you repeat it after me. I also want you to repeat the motion I make. After every part of the prayer, I will ask one of you to take a pillow and stack it in a pile—that will be our fort that reminds us of God’s protection. Ready?**

Dear God, thank you for protecting us from the rain and snow by giving us homes. Show the children how to make a roof with their hands by touching their fingertips together at an angle. Invite one child to start building the fort.

Thank you for protecting us by giving us brave firefighters who put out fires. Show the children how to pretend to hold a fire hose and douse a fire. Ask a second child to add to the fort.

Thank you for protecting us by giving us police officers who keep the roads safe for us. Lead the children in pretending to turn the steering wheel of a police car and make siren noises. Invite another child to add to the fort.

Thank you for teachers who keep us safe and teach us while we are in school. Instruct the children to pretend to write at an imaginary white board. Invite another child to add to the fort.

Thank you for our parents and other grown-ups who love us and keep us safe. Have the children give themselves a hug. Invite any child who has not yet added to the fort to take a turn adding a pillow. Instruct all the children to sit in a circle around the fort and hold hands.

Pray: **Dear God, we thank you for all the ways you protect us. Amen.**

