

THE AUERBACH CENTRAL AGENCY
FOR
JEWISH EDUCATION

FAMILY TIME FOR TORAH

EXODUS



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הסוכנות המרכזית לחינוך יהודי

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THE AUERBACH CENTRAL AGENCY
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OF GREATER PHILADELPHIA

FAMILY TIME FOR TORAH: THE BOOK OF EXODUS

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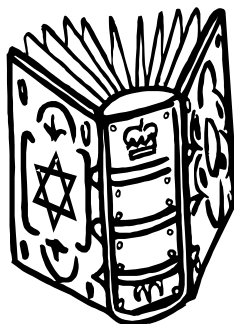
Thank you to Dr. Jeffrey H. Tigay, Ellis Professor of Hebrew and Semitic
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preparation of this material.



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FAMILY TIME FOR TORAH: HOW TO GET STARTED

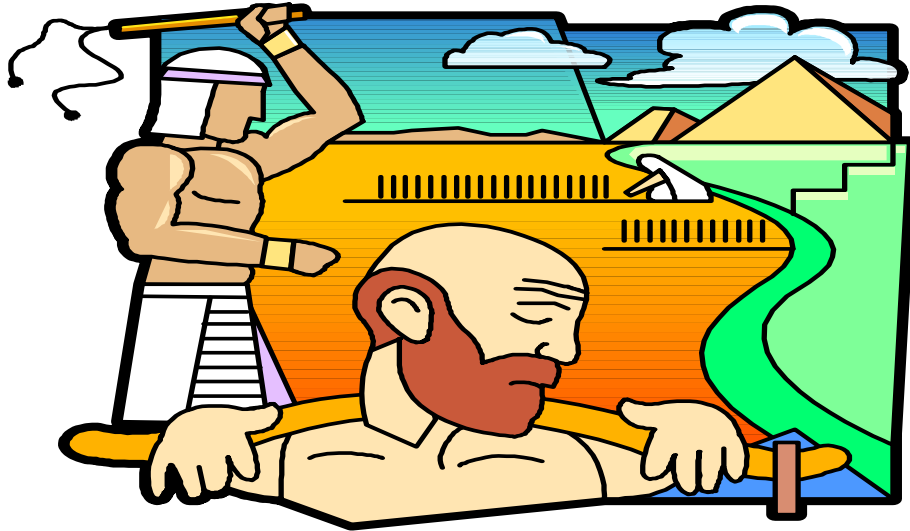
- Decide which adult will lead the discussion. Some families may want to rotate the responsibility or share it with a teenage child.
- Set a regular time for *FAMILY TIME FOR TORAH*. Friday evening Shabbat dinner is often a good time for most family members.
- All family members are important. Impress upon all family members that *FAMILY TIME FOR TORAH* is important and that they should be there.
- Read the Torah text and discussion questions from *FAMILY TIME FOR TORAH* in advance and choose which questions are most appropriate.
- Use a readable translation, such as the Jewish Publication Society's *Tanakh*. The same translation may be found in the Jewish Publication Society's *Torah Commentary: Exodus*, by Nahum Sarna and in *The Torah: A Modern Commentary* by Gunther Plaut. For younger children, parents may choose to paraphrase the text or use an appropriate children's Bible story book. (See bibliography)
- When possible and appropriate, provide texts for all participants. Take turns reading the text aloud. The JPS Torah is now on line to members of aol.com at *keyword: Torah*.
- Determine the length of the Torah study session on the basis of children's ages and attention spans.
- All answers should be taken seriously. Don't expect a single answer to a question; there are often several possible answers.
- Children should be given the opportunity to answer questions first. Quiet participants should be drawn into the conversation. Be generous with praise for participation.
- Encourage the use of costumes and props to make the text come alive.



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SESSION ONE

Read Chapter 1

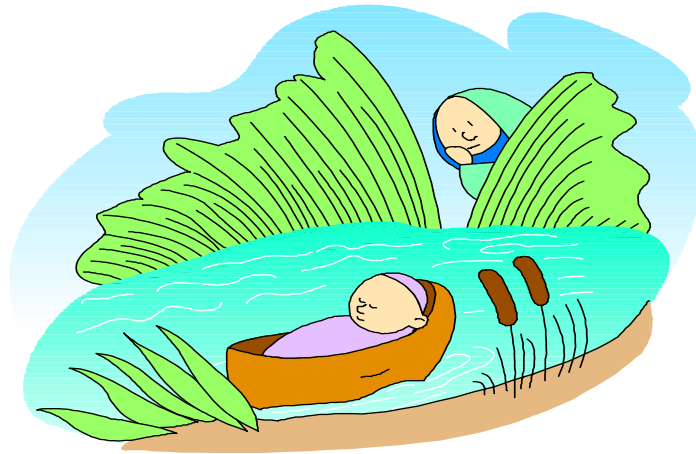
Pharaoh oppressed the Israelites and attempted to destroy them.

- What do we learn about the Israelites from verses 1-7? Why did Pharaoh think they were so threatening?
- Why do you think that the more the Egyptians oppressed the Israelites, the more they increased and spread out? Wouldn't you have expected the opposite?
- Why did the King of Egypt let the baby girls live while he demanded that the boys be killed? What reasons did the midwives give Pharaoh for letting the boys live? What was their real reason?

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SESSION TWO
Read Chapter 2

Moses was saved and grew up in Pharaoh's court. God heard the Israelites groaning.

- What is special about the way Moses was saved?
- How and by whom do you think Moses' personality and character were formed?
- What do we learn about Moses from verses 2:11 - 2:19?
- How did he show qualities of leadership?

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SESSION THREE

Read Chapter 3 - 4:17

Moses saw the burning bush and was called by God to lead the Israelites out of Egypt.

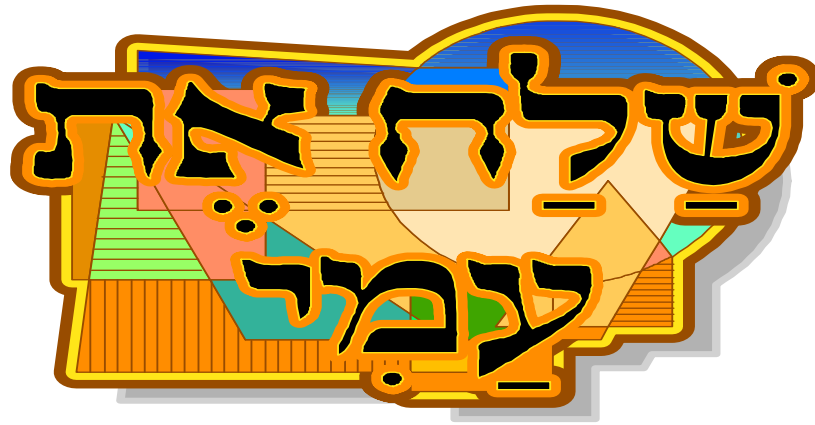
- In what ways do you think Moses' life was changed by his burning bush experience?
- What are some of the responsibilities of a good shepherd? How do you think the experience of being a shepherd prepared Moses to lead the children of Israel?

Read the section 3:7-4:17 aloud in dialogue form. Parents read the part of God and the children read the part of Moses. (Choose one person to be the narrator.)

- What were some of Moses' reasons for not wanting to go before the Israelites and Pharaoh?
- How did God respond to Moses' concerns?

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SESSION FOUR
Read Chapter 5:1- 6:1

Moses and Aaron came before Pharaoh.

- Describe Moses' and Aaron's negotiations with Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go out of Egypt. What were the results?
- If you were Moses or Aaron, how might you have tried to convince Pharaoh to let the Israelites go?
- If you were one of the Israelites, how would you have reacted to the new work hardships? What would you have said?

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SESSION FIVE

Read Chapter 7 and 8:1-11

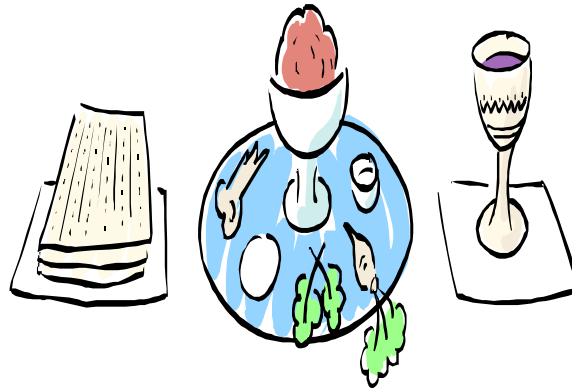
Moses and Aaron tried unsuccessfully to convince Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go and the Ten Plagues began.

- How long did God wait before hardening Pharaoh's heart? Why did He do so? Was it fair?
- What seemed to be the purpose of the plagues? Why not just one?
- What were the reactions of Pharaoh and the magicians to the plagues?
- The Torah does not tell us how the Israelites reacted. How do you imagine they felt?

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SESSION SIX

Read Chapter 11:4-12:42

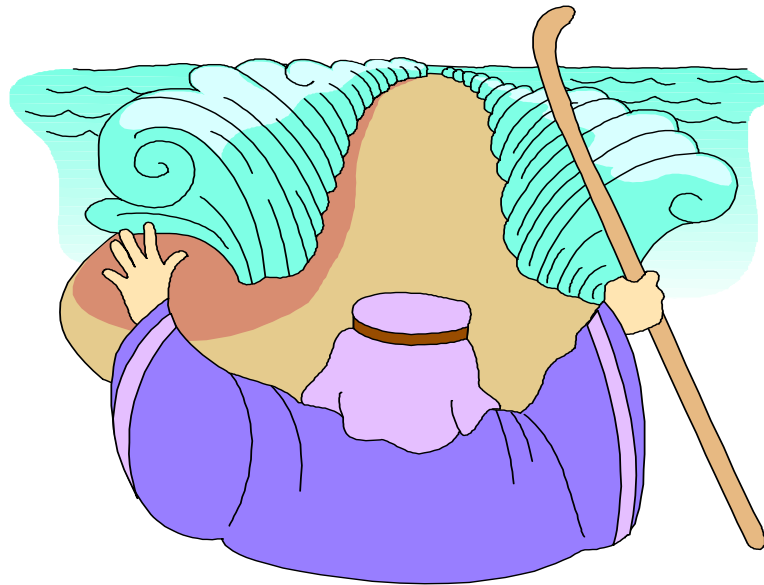
As the Israelites held the first Passover, the tenth plague occurred, and in the morning Moses led the people to freedom.

- Why do you think that all the Egyptians were punished by the plagues?
- What observances of the first Passover do we continue to observe today?
- Imagine that you are an Israelite former slave, now following Moses out from Egypt. What do you expect from Moses? From Pharaoh? From God? From yourself?

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SESSION SEVEN
Read Chapter 14

The crossing of the Red Sea.

- Why did Pharaoh change his mind and want the slaves returned? Why was his heart hardened again?
- How did the Israelites react to the sight of Pharaoh's army? Why?
- The Red Sea parted and the Israelites were saved. Do you believe that the splitting of the sea was a miracle? What miracles have you experienced?
- How do you think the Israelites felt after crossing the Red Sea? (Use adjectives to describe their feelings.) Do you know a song appropriate for this moment?

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SESSION EIGHT
Read Chapter 19 - 20

Moses brought his people to Mt. Sinai so they could hear the voice of God.
Read verses 19:5-6.

- Why did God want the people to hear Him speak to Moses?
- What is the covenant and what does it tell us about the relationship between God and Israel?
- The Israelites were supposed to be a kingdom of priests and holy people. What might their new responsibilities have meant?
- Look at what the Ten Commandments say. Why are they important? Are there any you might add? Explain why.
- What is the connection between the Exodus from Egypt and Mt. Sinai? How do you think each one affects the way we understand the other?

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