

God's Promise to His People

The Point: Nothing is too hard for God to do.

Scripture Connect: Exodus 6:1-8; 13:17, 18; 14:21-31

Supplies for all Session 1 activities options: pencils, prepared poster, paper, 2 rolls of pennies, metal spoons (2 per child), Bible, several coins, 1 plate, bucket of water, lightweight objects (see instructions)

The Basics for Leaders

God's promise: that he'd free his people. People who'd been slaves for hundreds of years, who were trapped within the borders of a superpower whose armies were more than able to keep them from escaping.

And to pry loose those thousands of enslaved people, God sent . . . one guy: Moses.

Well, Moses and Aaron. Two guys. Not great odds.

But with God, nothing is too hard. God kept his promise to his people, and he's keeping his awesome promises to his people still.

As you experience this session with your kids, consider whether you really believe that nothing is too hard for God. Because if that's true—and if God loves you—what might you ask his help with this week?

Ask him . . . and believe that God can do the impossible.

OPENING ACTIVITY—OPTION 1

HOWZITGOIN'

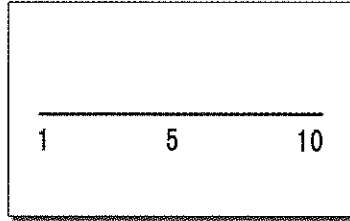
Time: about 5 minutes, depending on attendance

Supplies: pencils, prepared poster

Before kids arrive, draw a line on a poster. Place a 1 on the left end of the line, a 10 on the right, and a 5 in the middle. As kids arrive, ask them to pencil in their initials on the line.

Say: If this past week was so awful you wish you'd slept through it, place your initials by the 1. If it was a great week you wish you could repeat, put your initials by the 10. Place your initials anywhere on the line that shows how you feel about this past week—except exactly on the 5. That's because there's no such thing as a week that's exactly half good and half bad!

After kids have signed in, give them 30 seconds each to explain why they placed their initials where they did. Be sure to include your own initials and explain your placement on the line. Kids will begin to express themselves more over time—and hearing their stories will help you adapt this lesson to make it relevant to your kids' lives.



OPENING ACTIVITY—OPTION 2

FAVORITE PLACE POSTCARDS

Time: about 10 minutes

Supplies: paper, pencils

Give children a sheet of paper and pencil. Tell them the paper is a large postcard, but instead of the card already showing a photo, they'll draw a picture of a favorite place.

Say: **You can draw a favorite place you've been or one you'd like to visit. As for me, I'll draw . . .**

Briefly share a favorite place you've visited or would like to visit, and then ask kids to draw a favorite place of their own.

Allow several minutes for kids to draw. Then ask them each to show the group what they drew and briefly talk about the place they'd like to visit.

As a group, discuss:

• **What is it about the place you drew that makes it a favorite place?**

• **If you could go tomorrow, who—if anyone—would you take with you?**

• **What's keeping you from going to your favorite place?**

Say: **God's people had a favorite place in mind too. They were slaves in Egypt, but God had promised them a land of their own. That was their favorite place, but to get there they needed God to rescue them from their enemies, the Egyptians. We'll talk more about that in a few minutes. But first let's play a game together!**

Awesome Promise Game

Penny Horseshoes

Time: about 10 minutes

Supplies: 2 rolls of pennies

(Note: Rolls of pennies are readily available at banks. Larger retail stores may also be willing to swap two rolls of pennies for \$1, if you make a purchase.)

Before children arrive, break open one roll of pennies so the coins are loose. Place the other roll out of sight.

Ask children to stand in an open area. Give each child two pennies and these instructions: Children will toss, flip, or roll one penny at least ten feet away. Once the first penny lands, children will toss, flip, or roll their second

pennies with the goal of having the second penny end up touching the first penny. It seems simple—until you try it.

Have kids play three times, getting one point if the second penny is less than a penny-width from the first penny and two points if the pennies are touching.

Give each child an additional penny and have kids play with the same rules but with three pennies. Play several rounds.

Say: **You're doing well, but if you'd like to see how it's really done, watch me. I can do it with fifty pennies. And they'll all be touching!**

Expect scoffing, until you produce the roll of pennies and roll it to where their pennies are scattered on the floor. Then expect cries of "That's cheating!"

Ask kids to collect pennies and give them to you. Then, as a group, discuss:

- **What made this game easy or hard?**
- **Tell about a time you tried to do something you thought would be easy—but it turned out to be hard.**
- **What's something hard to do that you need help doing?**
- **What's something hard to do that you need God's help doing?**

Say: **We're going to talk about something that God's people needed God's help doing: getting out of slavery. They'd been slaves in Egypt for 400 years, and the Egyptian king, Pharaoh, didn't want to let them go. But unless they got away, they couldn't go to the promised land. God promised to help them. Let's hear more about that!**

Promise Kept BIBLE STORY

CLICK IT

Time: about 15 minutes

Supplies: metal spoons (2 per child), Bible

Give each child two metal spoons and ask kids to hold their spoons in one hand, the bowls of the spoons back-to-back. Have kids practice moving their spoons up and down against the palms of their hands to create a clicking

sound. Let kids practice for 30 seconds before you ask them to remain quiet.

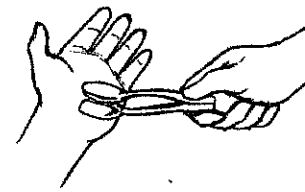
Explain that the sound effect they'll be making is the sound of God's people marching out of Egypt. During the story when they hear that God's people are on the move—that's when they'll make the sound.

Read aloud Exodus 6:1-8; 13:17, 18; 14:21-31. Encourage kids to clack their spoons as you read Exodus 13:18 and 14:21-23, in particular.

When you've finished reading—and kids have clacked—collect spoons and, as a group, discuss:

- **What was surprising about how God kept his promise to help his people become free and get to the promised land?**
- **God wanted to get his people to the promised land, but the Egyptians got in the way. What's something that God wants you to do or be—and what's in your way?**

Say: **God didn't give his people an army that would fight back when the Egyptians came after them. God used water to beat the Egyptian army—and he kept his promise to help his people get to the promised land. Back then, nothing was too hard for God! And that's still true today—nothing is too hard for God to do. He's still keeping his awesome promises to us!**



AGE-ALERT TIPS

Very young children can simply hit their spoons together.

CLOSING PRAYER

POWERFUL PRAYER

Time: about 5 minutes

Supplies: none

Ask kids to join you in standing in a circle. Say: **God's people found out that there's nothing too hard for God to do. Free them from slavery?**

He could do it. Help them get to the promised land? He could do that too.

When we think of God, let's think of him as powerful. Please join me in getting on our knees to worship our powerful God.

Have kids join you by getting on their knees. Thank God for his power. Then say: **When we think of God, let's think of him as loving. He loves us.**

Have kids imitate you as you cup your hands in front of you. Explain that you're doing this as a sign that you want to receive God's love. Thank God for his love.

Have kids join you in standing again. Say: **When we think of God, let's think of him helping us stand strong on his promises.** Thank God for his promises.

Finish by praying: **In Jesus' name, amen.**

EXTRA-TIME ACTIVITY—OPTION 1

MOVE THEM ISRAELITES!

Time: about 10 minutes

Supplies: several coins, 1 plate

Scatter coins on the floor and tell kids their job is to move the coins from the floor to the plate—without using their hands. Don't suggest alternatives; kids will quickly think to pull off their shoes and use their toes . . . or find another alternative. (Note: But don't let them use their mouths/teeth; coins could be swallowed.)

Explain that the world record for the task is 90 seconds and their job is to beat the record. Before starting the clock, have them discuss how they'll work together and accomplish the task.

Then give them 90 seconds, but allow a second 90 seconds, if necessary. As a group, discuss:

- **What made this "impossible" task easier—or harder?**
- **Tell about a time when you and some friends did something together that you couldn't have done by yourself.**

Say: **God's people—the Israelites—were like the coins: they couldn't move without help. They needed God's help to escape Egypt. It seemed impossible, but nothing is too hard for God to do! God kept his promise.**

- **What's an "impossible" thing that you'd like God to do?**

EXTRA-TIME ACTIVITY—OPTION 2

DOES IT FLOAT?

Time: about 10 minutes

Supplies: bucket of water, lightweight objects

Before children arrive, collect a variety of lightweight objects: corks, paper clips, feathers, plastic lids, pencils, buttons, rubber bands, etc.

Place the bucket of water where children can all gather around it. One at a time, drop the objects into the water, asking before each object is dropped who thinks it will sink and who thinks it will float.

Then say: **God used water to drown the Egyptian army. When the water rushed in, soldiers couldn't swim to safety. The chariots—the small wagons pulled by horses, which soldiers rode into battle—didn't float!** Discuss:

- **Why do you think God didn't just kill the Egyptian army before they got to where God's people were waiting?**
- **How has God shown his power and love to you? How has he kept you safe in scary places and during scary times?**
- **If God promises something, he'll do it. Nothing is too hard for God to do. Do you believe that? Why or why not?**

EXTRA-TIME ACTIVITY—OPTION 3

INQUIRING MINDS WANT TO KNOW

Time: about 5 minutes

Supplies: none

Gather kids in a circle. Ask: ***If nothing is too hard for God, why hasn't God solved all the problems in the world, like war and hunger?***