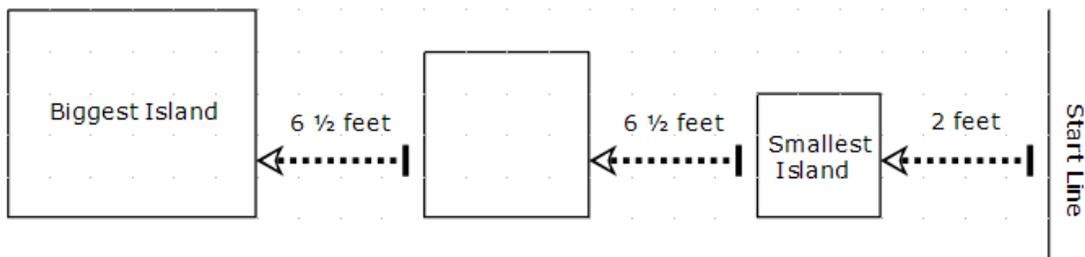


Supplies: A bag of Hershey's Kisses (make sure you have 10 for every team - a team will consist of 5 people. See the first activity to see why 10 per team could be different than 2 per student); 1 pair of bulky, winter gloves per team (1 team = 5 students); A ten-foot long rope to use as a starting line; a timer; a six-foot long 2'x4'; a large open (no furniture getting in the way) room; 3 islands. Each island should be progressively smaller than the previous island (for instance 40"x40" 30"x30" and 20"x20"). They also have to be raised up. They can't just be flat pieces of cardboard/plywood. You can certainly use or build crates, but I go the cheaper route and use old telephone books and old hymnals or other books in the church building that don't get used - I then secure on top of them some cardboard to make for even-footing. I usually have to go cardboard dumpster diving (Starbucks are good places for this) to get large enough cardboard boxes to cut up. I secure the underside of cardboard with duct tape to the tops and sides of the telephone books and then fill in the middle with the old hymnals (without taping the cardboard to them).

Setup: For the Island activity setup, place the starting rope about 2 feet from the first and smallest island. Then about 6 1/2 feet away from the 1st island on the side furthest from the starting line, place the 2nd, slightly larger island. Then 6 1/2 feet away from the 2nd island place the 3rd and largest island. It'll look something like this:



OPENING PRAYER

TELL

- For the opening question, I'm going to ask you a question and then we'll go around the circle and say our names and then give our answer to the question.
- I'll ask the question and then I'll answer first, ok?
- Opening question: *In the story we're going to read today, Pharaoh has let the Israelites go, but then changes his mind and chases them. Have you ever had to say goodbye to/throw something away that you didn't want to let go of? What was it? What finally happened?(hints: maybe a toy they've outgrown, like a stuffed animal or maybe a bad habit, like chewing their nails, or a relative/friend who has moved away)*

GO AROUND THE CIRCLE

TELL

- During this Session (Patriarchs, Joseph and Moses), we've been talking and learning about Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Moses.
- These 5 individuals had a lot to do with the beginning of who we call the Israelites.
- By learning the stories of these 5 individuals, we are also getting the chance to learn and see how the relationship between the Israelites and God starts, struggles, and matures.
- All of these stories that we're hearing and talking about in this Session are from the Old Testament. This means these things happened well before Jesus was born. Between 1600 to 2000 years before Jesus was born. This means some of these stories are 4000 years old!
- Last week, we talked about the consequences all of Egypt experienced when Pharaoh wouldn't let the Israelites go.
- In today's story, Pharaoh finally lets the Israelites go, but then changes his mind and gives chase to bring them back. This is our last story for this session.
- Let's find out what happens!

READ Exodus 14:8-31

8 Soon after the Israelites left, Pharaoh changed his mind. Just like the other nine times, after he'd said he's let Israelites go, and then changed his mind, so he changed his mind again to NOT let the Israelites go 9 And so the Egyptians pursued the Israelites with all of Pharaoh's horses and chariots, his chariot drivers and his army; they approached the Israelites who were camped by the sea, by Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon.

10 As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites looked back, and there were the Egyptians advancing on them. In great fear the Israelites cried out to the Lord. 11 They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? 12 Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, "Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians"? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." 13 But Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the Lord will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. 14 The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to keep still."

15 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Tell the Israelites to go forward. 16 Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the Israelites may go into the sea on dry ground." 19 The angel of God who was going before the Israelites moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. 20 It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

21 Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. 22 The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

26 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back to where it was." 27 So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. The Egyptians who had tried to follow the Israelites fled as the water came down. Some of them didn't make it back, but every Israelite walked on dry ground through the sea, with the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. 30 Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians. 31 Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people trusted the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

ASK

- As Pharaoh approached the Israelites, what was the Israelites response? (To be angry at Moses and God).
- They say things like, "Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians" and "Were there not enough graves in Egypt that you brought us out here to die?" Sounds like the Israelites are having as hard of a time as Pharaoh was in letting go of their old ways of life, doesn't it? Does this surprise you?
- So Pharaoh's changing of his mind leads to him chasing the Israelites. Did this work out for Pharaoh? (No, not at all - it got some of his soldiers killed)
- How did the Israelites get away from the Egyptians? (God tells Moses to split the Red Sea. The Israelites walk through the sea on dry land. The water collapses around the Egyptians when they try to follow.)
- Even though you may have heard this story before, do you find the idea of water separating and then walking through it as an unexpected way for God to help out the Israelites? Doesn't there seem like there an easier way for God to help the Israelites out? What might be some other ideas that come to mind about how God could've saved the Israelites from the Egyptians?

TELL

- One thing to keep in mind as we think about this story is that water was also understood in the Hebrew storytelling tradition as a symbol for chaos.
- So its not just that God separates the waters for the Israelites. The story is also saying that God provides the Israelites a way through the *chaos*.
- And this is something we've seen happen throughout the formation of the Israelite people. In the stories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses and the Israelites, we've seen over and over again how God offers a way through the obstacles and challenges of chaos.
- Also, the way that God leads the Israelites through the water mirrors the language of the Genesis Creation story, where it says that God created the land (firmament) by "separating the waters from the waters." And then, the land (firmament) is where God places the humans to live. We are meant to walk and live on the dry land that God provides for us.
- But what usually happens for us is that we try to do it our own way. And when we do it our own way, we end up living in the chaos. When we live in the chaos, sooner or later we get swallowed up by the chaos, like the Egyptians did in this story.
- So we're going to do two activities today that hopefully help us think about how living God's way for us is better for us than living our own, chaotic way.

EXPLAIN Unwrap the Hershey Kiss ACTIVITY

- This is a relay race that we're going to do.
- First, we're going to get into teams of 5.
- If we don't have enough people to have even teams, then the teams with less than 5 members will have members go again, until the team has sent its representatives for a combined total of 5 trips.
- The starting line, here, is marked by a rope/yarn/string that the teams must stay behind.
- Over here, about 15 feet away at this table are 5 Hershey Kisses per team.
- The object is for each person to, in turns, walk up to the table, and unwrap one Hershey Kiss.
- After successfully unwrapping the Kiss, the team member returns to the team. Upon returning, the next team member goes to the table to unwrap the next Hershey Kiss.

- After the person unwraps their Hershey Kiss, they may eat it. If you do not like Hershey Kisses, you can just leave the unwrapped Kiss on the table.
- While you are doing this, I will be timing each team. When your team has unwrapped 5 Hershey Kisses, then your team will sit down. Once your team sits down, I will write down your time.
- Any questions?
- Ready, set...GO!

DO Hershey Kiss Relay - Round 1

EXPLAIN ROUND 2

- For this round, we're going to do the same thing, but this time, you must wear gloves to unwrap the Hershey Kiss!
- The way it'll work is that when I say "GO" then the person at the end of the line, who will have the pair of gloves, will come to the front of the line and put them on the person who is first in line.
- Then, the person with gloves on goes and unwraps the Hershey Kiss and comes back.
- When that person returns, s/he takes off the gloves and puts them on the next person in line and so on.
- Once your team has sent 5 people, have a seat.
- I will write down your time when you sit down.
- Any questions?
- Ready, Set....GO!

DO Hershey Kiss Relay - Round 2

ASK

- How difficult was it to unwrap the kiss without the gloves on?
- How difficult was it to unwrap the kiss with the gloves on?
- Which way took more time?
- In what ways did the gloves make the task harder?

TELL

- When we pay attention to God, it's like *not* wearing gloves to unwrap Hershey Kisses.
- But, when we live life without paying attention to God, then we're choosing to live life in a way that makes things harder and more chaotic for ourselves, like wearing gloves to unwrap Hershey kisses.
- So why would we ever choose to not pay attention to God? Because to choose to live God's way requires some learning, whereas just living in the chaos doesn't require any learning at all - we just do whatever we want.
- Our second activity today will hopefully show us, then, why it is that we so often end up in the chaos, like the Egyptians did.

EXPLAIN

- The task for you is to get from this starting point, to the last square.
- Surrounding the "islands" is a watery chaos.
- You have one 6 foot-long 2"x4" board to help you cross.
- Successful completion of your task, is when you get everyone on to the last square.

- There are some rules to know:
- You may not jump from one island to the next, though you MAY jump from the start line to the first island.
- You may not move an island.
- The first time you touch the watery chaos (the floor), you get blindfolded and have to start over.
- The second time you touch the watery chaos, you get paralyzed from the waist down.
- The third time you touch the watery chaos, you're out of the activity, which means the whole team has to start over.
- If the board or any other item touches the chaos (the floor), it gets swept away (meaning you've lost it - if its the board you've lost, then you might as well start over).

DO Islands ACTIVITY

NOTES for the TEACHER:

- The best way, and for the most part, the only way, for the kids to cross from Island 1 to Island 2 and from Island 2 to Island 3 is by having a couple of kids stand on one end of the board while the other part of the board stretches across the chaos for about 4 feet. Then, they can jump the remaining gap. Depending on remaining classroom time and the overall age of your classroom, you'll probably have to tell them this fact pretty quickly - because even with this fact, there's still some problem solving that needs to take place.

ASK

- So would it have been easier to just give up, jump off the islands and wander aimlessly about in the chaos? (probably, and maybe even more fun, but not nearly as successful or productive or helpful to others)
- But now that you've learned how to do the Island activity, even though it takes a little bit of work, you now know the best way to get to the other side, right?
- Which means that's the way you'd probably do it again next time, right?

TELL

- And this is what its like for us with God.
- It takes some work to learn how to seek and follow God.
- We saw this with Jacob, Joseph and the Israelites: Actually following what God's saying and then actually doing it, does not happen automatically.
- But as we learn how to do so, then we can see how living God's way is the better way.
- The Good News for today, and for this session, is that living God's way frees us from old ways of living (like enslavement or separation from our family) and keeps us from getting swallowed up by the watery chaos, like what happened to the Egyptians.

CLOSING PRAYER