

Short All Age Worship Service

(ShortAAW005)

**The Big Story of God 5:
God sets his people
free through Moses**

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THE BIG STORY OF GOD 5

GOD SETS HIS PEOPLE FREE THROUGH MOSES

Service Aim:

To teach that God acted through Moses to set the Israelites free from slavery in Egypt and he acts through Jesus to set us free from slavery to sin.

This service can be used on its own or as part of a series of services covering major biblical themes from Genesis to Revelation.

Biblical Reference(s):

Exodus 1:1-17, 3:1-21, 7:6-12:41, Isaiah 61:1-2, Luke 4:14-20, John 8:36, Galatians 5:1, Romans 6:16-18

Outline of Service:

Welcome:	Introduce the theme
Opening Prayer:	Matthew 18:20 and prayer
Opening songs:	<u>A couple of songs to draw people into worship</u> (See Appendix 1)
Drama:	“The Auction” drama
Link:	Introduction to reading
Bible Reading:	Story-tell the story of the Israelites being set free from slavery
Song:	<u>Song about God’s power</u> (See Appendix 1)
Talk:	Gods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promise (<i>to set free from slavery</i>) • Person (<i>Moses and Jesus</i>) • Power (<i>shown in the ten plagues and on the cross</i>)
Response:	Construct a red paper chain of “sin” which is then broken
Prayers:	Praying for those bound in slavery today
Lord’s Prayer	
Summary:	God set the Israelites free from their slavery to Egyptian slave masters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus sets us free from the slavery to sin
Final song:	<u>Final song</u> (See Appendix 1)
Blessing:	Numbers 6:24-26

Notes for the service:

General notes and instructions for the service are in black font.

Prayers or responses said by the congregation together are in bold purple font.

The full script of a talk or other activity is in purple font.

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Welcome:

Welcome everyone to the service. Explain that the theme of the service is “Freedom.” If you are using this service as part of the series: “The Big Story of God”, explain that too.

Opening Prayer:

You may choose to open the service with:

- an informal prayer
- a prayer from a book like “New Patterns for Worship”¹ that the congregation can say together,
- or the following verse and prayer:

Jesus said, *“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them”*
(Matthew 18:20)

As you promise to be with us Lord Jesus,
We welcome you here today.

**Help us Lord to worship you,
To listen to your Word,
And to pray in faith,
That we might grow in our love for you and for one another.
Amen.**

Opening Songs:

A couple of songs to draw people into worship as per Appendix 1

Drama:

The drama is called “The Auction” and can be found in Appendix 2. The purpose of this drama is to open up the subject of slavery in preparation for the rest of the service.

Link:

Slavery is a terrible thing.

- A slave is someone who is owned by another person,
- and who has to do anything that their “slave master” tells them to do.
- They can often be treated very badly and used like a possession.

Sadly slavery happens all over the world today, but it is not a new thing.

- Hundreds of years ago Abraham’s descendants had grown and grown in number until they became a great nation, called the Israelites.
- They were living in Egypt when a new Pharaoh came to the throne.

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This Pharaoh didn't like them and made the Israelites his slaves.

- They were treated really badly by the Egyptians and cried out to God for His help.
- Let's hear what happened.

Bible Reading:

The Bible reading covers quite a few chapters from the book of Exodus (1:1-17, 3:1-21, 7:6-12:41) and so would work well if it was "story-told" with some props. See Appendix 3.

Song:

A song about God's power as per Appendix 1

Talk:

This talk works well if you project the headings of the talk to help people follow the message. It would also work to have three signs that you bring out at the appropriate points in the talk.

What an amazing rescue story we have just heard.

- I want to draw out three points and they all begin with the letter P.
- They are God's Promise, God's Person and God's Power.

1) God's Promise

God is a God who keeps his promises.

Many years before the Israelites were slaves in Egypt,

- God had made a promise to a man called Abraham.

He had promised to bless Abraham and make him into a great nation,

- and through him to bless all the nations on earth. (*Put up a sign that says, "I will bless you"*)

When God saw the Israelites suffering in their slavery,

- and heard their cries of pain,
- He came and set them free from their slavery as the next part of keeping the promise He had made to Abraham.

Our God hasn't changed and is the same today as he was yesterday.

- God still promises to bless us and as part of that blessing He wants to set us free from our slavery.

We may not realise we are slaves, but the Bible tells us that we are all slaves to sin.

- It's like we have no choice over whether we think, say or do wrong things or not.....

2) God's Person

God chose a man called Moses to help him in his great freedom mission of setting His people free from slavery.

- God needed Moses to be His spokesman to Pharaoh and to lead the people of Israel.

All through the big story of God, we discover that God chooses to work through people,

- to bring about His great purposes. (*Put up a sign that says, "God works through people"*)

Many years after Moses, God's Son Jesus came to earth as a man,

- on God's greatest freedom mission of all.

Jesus came to not only be God's spokesman to all of mankind,

- telling us about our Father's love,
- but he came to set us all free from our slavery to sin.

3) God's Power

Pharaoh thought that he had the power to keep God's people in slavery,

- but he was wrong.

God's power was much much greater than Pharaoh's,

- and He had the power to set the slaves free. (*Put up a sign that says, "God has the power to set people free"*)

When Pharaoh refused to listen to Moses, God showed Pharaoh His power through the sending of the ten plagues;

- the last plague showing that He alone held the power over life and death.

God's power hasn't changed.

- He has the power to set us free from our slavery to sin,
- because of what Jesus did for us on the cross.

So from this great story of God setting His people free many hundreds of years ago we discover that:

- God kept His promise to bless and He still promises to bless today.
- God chose to bring about His amazing plan through an ordinary person called Moses, and He brought about his greatest plan of all through Jesus
- God is the One who has the power to set slaves free. He set the Israelite slaves free from a powerful Pharaoh, and he sets us free from the powerful slavery of sin.

Response:

The response involves encouraging people to confess their sins, by making a small paper chain, which is then broken symbolically after the Confession prayer. Each person is given half a dozen pieces of red gummed paper². You also need a long red paper chain as a visual aid.

We want to give each one of us now an opportunity to come to Jesus and be set free from the sins that bind us up like a great big chain. (*Show visual aid of long red paper chain*)

² You can purchase red gummed paper chains from Amazon at http://www.amazon.co.uk/500-Green-Christmas-Paper-Chains/dp/B00LZSC4LE/ref=sr_1_9?ie=UTF8&qid=1441983500&sr=8-9&keywords=gummed+paper+chains

We should all have half a dozen pieces of red gummed paper.

- After I have prayed a simple prayer, there will be a short time of silence.
- During that time, allow the Holy Spirit to show you any sins that He wants to set you free from,
- and as he shows you, use your paper to make up a paper chain....to show symbolically the slavery of sin.

Let's pray:

Father, you are the God who delights to set people free from their slavery.

Thank you for sending Jesus so that we can be set free from our sins.

Please show us Holy Spirit those sins that are binding us up.....so that we can confess them silently to you. PAUSE

As people are silent, add some chains to your long red paper chain to encourage people to make up their own chains. When you have left a minute or two of silence and you can see that people have made up their chains say something like:

Let us say sorry to God now for the wrong things we have done.

Father we confess that we have thought, said and done things that have been wrong.

We are sorry and want to change.

Thank you that Jesus paid for our sins when He died on the cross and rose again.

Please forgive us and set us free from our wrongdoing.

Help us use the freedom you give us to walk closely with you.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Father thank you for your promise that when we confess our sins to you, you are faithful and just and forgive us our sins and cleanse us from our wrongdoing.

Please break the power of sin over our lives now *(Break the large chain into two pieces)*

In Jesus' name. Amen.

You might like to break your chains too.

Prayers:

Follow the response with a simple prayer for those who are suffering from modern day slavery that they would be set free.

Lord's Prayer:

End by saying the Lord's Prayer together.

Summary:

Summarize the teaching points of the service ie:

We have learnt that God set the Israelites free from the slavery to Egyptian slave masters.

- Today, Jesus sets us free from our slavery to sin.

Final Song:

Final song as per Appendix 1

Blessing:

Pray a simple prayer to end the service, something like the blessing prayer from Numbers 6:24-26 ie:

The LORD bless you and keep you;

The LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;

The LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace. **Amen.**

[Notices: If your church gives out verbal notices my suggestion is that you do that just before the final song. That way the flow of worship is unbroken]

Appendix 1 - Ideas for Songs and Hymns:

i) A couple of songs to draw people into worship. Ideas include:

- At your name (Phil Wickham, Tim Hughes © 2011 Phil Wickham Music)
- Come on, let's celebrate (John Hardwick © 1995 Hardwick, John)
- My lips shall praise you (Noel Richards, Tricia Richards © 1991 Thankyou Music)
- Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord (Brenton Brown, Ken Riley © 2005 Thankyou Music)

ii) A song about God's power. Ideas include:

- Moses went down to see Pharoah (Jim Bailey © 1997 Thankyou Music)
- Our God is a great big God (Jo Hemming, Nigel Hemming © 2001 Vineyard Songs (UK/Eire))
- Our God is an awesome God (Rich Mullins © 1988 Universal Music - Brentwood Benson Publishing)
- The splendour of the King (Chris Tomlin, Ed Cash, Jesse Reeves © 2004 sixsteps Music)
- You are mighty, you are holy (Craig Musseau © 1989 Mercy / Vineyard Publishing)

iii) Final song. Ideas include:

- Amazing grace with chorus, "My chains are gone" (Chris Tomlin, John Newton, Louie Giglio © 2006 sixsteps Music)
- I give you all the honour (Carl Tuttle © 1982 Shadow Spring Music)
- Jesus you endured my pain (Phil Wickham © 2008 Phil Wickham Music)
- Thank you for saving me (Martin Smith © 1993 Curious? Music UK)
- There is love that came for us (Ben Fielding, Reuben Morgan © 2007 Hillsong Music Publishing)
- There is power in the name of Jesus (Noel Richards © 1989 Thankyou Music)

Appendix 2 - Drama - "The Auction"

- Cast:** Auctioneer, slave boy, Person 1, Person 2, Woman, Farmer, Clothing manager, Usher
- Props:** Slave boy dressed in ragged shirt and shorts and barefoot. Tin of sweets, table and hammer.
- Staging:** This drama works well if Person 1, Person 2, Woman, Farmer and Clothing Manager sit in the congregation in different places and when they bid, they stand up to speak and then sit down again. They could speak their words off scripts so that people could be asked to do this as they come into church.

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(Enter Auctioneer who walks and stands behind a table with the tin of sweets on it.)

Auctioneer: Welcome back to our auction this morning. We are now down to the last two items for sale....I hope you are ready to begin bidding again.

The first item is this unopened brand new tin of sweets.....surplus to requirements.

Let's open with one pound. Do I hear one pound from anyone?

Person 1: One pound

Auctioneer: Any increase on one pound? One pound twenty?

Person 2: One pound twenty

Auctioneer: Do I hear one pound fifty from anyone?

Person 1: One pound fifty

Person 2: Two pounds

Auctioneer: These are very delicious sweets. Do I hear two pounds fifty?

Person 1: Two pound fifty

Person 2: Three pounds

Auctioneer: Any advance on three pounds? Do I hear three pounds ten from anyone?
(Pause)

No-one? For the last time three pounds.

Going, going, gone to the *lady / gentleman* on the middle row.

And now for our second and final item this morning. Bring him in.

(Enter Usher bringing in boy. Boy is lifted up to stand on the table. He looks blankly ahead as he is auctioned.)

OK we have here a boy aged ten years old, in pretty good condition. You could use him in the home for all your domestic work, or out in the fields. He could also work well for you in a factory. What do I have for him? Let's start with five pounds.

Woman: I could do with someone to work for me and do all my chores. I'll pay five pounds.

Auctioneer: Any advance on five pounds?

Farmer: I need someone to work in my fields. I could use a strong lad. I'll pay ten pounds.

Auctioneer: Any advance on ten pounds? He's quite young still so you'll get plenty of years of work out of him.

Manager: I'll pay fifteen pounds for a boy to come and work in my clothing factory. We need more workers as the demand for cheap clothing is going up.

Auctioneer: Any advance on fifteen pounds?

Woman: He'll have to be up before daylight. I need water fetching from the well three miles away before breakfast. Eighteen pounds.

Farmer: I'll pay twenty pounds. He's quite small so he won't need much food and he should manage to work an eighteen hour day.

Manager: I could get him working longer than eighteen hours.....twenty five pounds.

Woman: Thirty pounds

Farmer: Forty pounds

Manager: Forty two pounds. *(It all goes quiet for a few seconds)*

Auctioneer: Do I hear any more than forty two pounds? This boy won't cost you much. He comes with a full set of clothes. *(Silence for a few seconds)*

For the last time any increase on forty two pounds for this twenty four hour a day slave? *(Silence for a few seconds)*

Going, going, gone! Sold to the Clothing Manager over there!

(Enter Usher who comes and takes the boy down from the table and leads him out. Auctioneer leaves)

Appendix 3 – “The story of God setting the Israelites free” (Exodus 1:1-17, 3:1-21, 7:6-12:41)

Cast: Storyteller dressed in a long tunic with belt and a head-dress, God (off-stage voice)

Props: House-brick, spade, shepherd’s crook, straw, glass of red water, plastic frog, doll wrapped in a blanket like a baby.

Storyteller: Good morning,
My name is Benjamin and I was once a slave in Egypt.

Oh what a terrible time we all suffered under the new Pharaoh. He had us all working from the crack of dawn until the sun went down building his store cities of Pithom and Rameses, (*hold up a house-brick*) and working out in the fields (*hold up a spade*).

We had slave masters watching us day in day out and cracking their whips against our bare backs if we didn’t work fast enough. How miserable we were and how bitter our lives were. We cried out to our God day after day, asking him to set us free.

We had no idea how God would set us free, but God had a plan.

One day, in the land of Midian, an Israelite man called Moses, who had earlier run away from Egypt, was out in the wilderness with his sheep. (*hold up shepherd’s crook*) He suddenly noticed something very strange....he saw a bush that was on fire, but it wasn’t burning up. As he came near to the bush God spoke to him and said:

God: Moses. Take off your sandals. You’re standing on holy ground. I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I have seen what is happening to my people in Egypt and I have heard their cries for help. I am going to help them and set them free from their slavery and bring them to their own land. I’m sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people out of Egypt.

Storyteller: Now you can imagine that Moses wasn’t too keen on this idea as he knew how powerful the Pharaoh was and that he wouldn’t be very happy about losing all of his slaves. But God was insistent, and wasn’t taking “no” for an answer.

So Moses, together with his brother Aaron headed back to Egypt and went to see the Pharaoh. Unfortunately Pharaoh did not like what Moses had to say and so made our lives worse, even making us collect the straw for the bricks we made. (*hold up some straw*)

We were not happy with Moses at all even though he told us that God was going to rescue us.

While we were slaving away in the fields and in the cities, God sent Moses back to Pharaoh with His message:

God: Release my people so that they can worship me.

Storyteller: Pharaoh thought that he was the greatest and he wasn't going to listen to God so God sent him ten signs to show Pharaoh that he meant business.

The first sign God gave Pharaoh was turning the water of the river Nile to blood. *(hold up a glass with red water)* You'd have thought that Pharaoh would have listened to God after seeing that, but his heart was hard, and he wasn't going to release us from slavery.

Over the coming days God sent sign after sign to show Pharaoh that He was the mighty God and was to be obeyed. He made frogs come up out of all the rivers and pools in Egypt and cover the land. *(Hold up a plastic frog)*

He sent gnats, swarms of flies and diseases on all of the Egyptian animals. He caused boils to break out on all of the Egyptians. He sent a huge hail storm and swarms of locusts and even made a thick darkness come over Egypt for three days.

But still Pharaoh wouldn't listen and let us go.....

Finally God told Moses that he was going to give Pharaoh one last sign. He was going to come and take the eldest son in every Egyptian family, including Pharaoh's son. *(Hold up a doll wrapped in a blanket like a baby)*

Moses came and told us that we needed to get ready to leave Egypt, because God was going to come and set us free. He told us what God was going to do to the Egyptians and how we needed to smear our door frames with the blood of a lamb so that we would be saved.

I will never forget the night that God set us free from our slavery. Suddenly we heard all of this crying.....it was the Egyptians when they found that their eldest sons had died. We heard that Pharaoh had said that we could go, so we quickly picked up the things that we had got ready, and we left our homes.

No longer were we slaves for Pharaoh. Now we were free to go and live in a new land where we could worship and get to know the God who had saved us.

(Exit Storyteller)

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