The Passover:

The Story of Passover The people of Israel had lived in Egypt for a very long time. But the king of Egypt, called Pharaoh, was not kind to them and forced them to do very hard work for very little money. They were tired and sad and longed for the day they would be free.

One day, God spoke to a good man called Moses, and told him he wanted to help his people and to free them from Egypt. When Moses told the Pharaoh what God had said, Pharaoh laughed and did not believe Moses. So God told Moses he would work miracles in Egypt to show Pharaoh that it was true. Even these, however, were hardly enough to convince Pharaoh, but eventually he gave in and told Moses that the people could leave Egypt after all.

God told Moses to prepare his people for what was about to happen. They were to have a meal – a special lamb was to be cooked and shared by each family. They were to eat bitter herbs to remind them of the bitterness of their lives in Egypt, and drink wine as they looked forward to the joy of being free. “For all time,” God said to Moses, “my people are to have a meal like this so that they will always remember how I saved them from slavery in Egypt to lead them to a new and happier life. They will sing songs and tell stories of what I have done for them, and they will tell their children who will pass it on to their children and so on for evermore.”

And so, after they had eaten this special meal, they came out of their homes and followed Moses out into the desert to begin their journey to a new life.

But Pharaoh had changed his mind. He sent his soldiers after the people of Israel to bring them back, and the people were afraid. They were even more afraid when they came to the Red Sea. They could see the other shore in the distance, but it was too far to swim to and the sea was too deep to walk through. How would they ever escape now? But God said to Moses: “Stretch out you hand over the sea. I will help my people cross the sea safely.”

So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. No sooner had he done this than the sea began to move, first to one side and then to the other. The sea parted and great walls of water stood up on each side and a path appeared on the sea-bed in between. The people of Israel started to walk across the dry sea-bed and every one of them reached the other side safely. The army of Egypt reached the seashore, but as they did, Moses lifted his hand over the sea once more, and the walls of water came crashing down. The sea returned to its usual place so that the army could not cross over. The people of Israel were amazed at what had happened and they began to celebrate what God had done. He had saved them from Pharaoh and from Egypt. Now, they were free!