

Living Life!

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Everyone loves Nawroz!

When I think of Nawroz I think of legends of tyrants, bonfires made from burning tires, picnics, dancing, new party clothes, and the Kurdish flag.



“Nawroz” means “first day” and refers to the first day of spring, which is also the first day of the Kurdish year. It is the first day of the ancient Kurdish calendar.

So, what is the legend of Nawroz? Of course you know it – or maybe you’ve heard a slightly different version of the one I re-tell here.

On March 21, in the year 612, Kawa the blacksmith killed the tyrant named “Zahak” and brought freedom to the Kurds and many other Middle Eastern people. This is the story that my friend Haval told me several years ago.

**Happy
Nawroz!**



The Legend of Nawroz

as told by Haval

It is said that a long time ago there was a tyrant, a ruler whose name was Zahak. Zahak had two heads, one of which was a snake.

One day he got sick. All sorts of doctors visited him to try to diagnose his illness. This was their prescription: “You must drink the blood of two teenagers every day as your medicine.” After that, Zahak killed a lot of teenagers in order to drink their blood.

During this time there was a blacksmith named Kawa. Zahak wanted to kill Kawa’s son so that he could drink his blood. But of course Kawa didn’t want him to do that! Neither did anyone else want their son or daughter to die. So, Kawa got all the people together and told them, “I’m going to kill Zahak.” None of the people believed him because Zahak was very strong. But Kawa replied, “No, I’m going to kill him tonight. And when I have done so, I’m going to light a bonfire to let you know.”

Kawa did indeed kill Zahak that evening. When he stood before Zahak, he said, “Here’s my son. You ordered me to bring him to you so that you could drink his blood.” Then when Kawa went up close to Zahak, he drew a sword and cut off his head! He also killed a lot of Zahak’s guards.

Then Kawa went to the roof of Zahak’s palace. He took off his yellow shirt and raised it high, like a flag for Kurdistan. Then he lit a bonfire on the top of a mountain and soon everyone nearby saw it and knew that Zahak was dead. They were so happy! The people in the next village also lit a bonfire on the top of their mountain, as did the people of the next village. That’s how they got the word out all over Kurdistan that Zahak was dead.

Since that time Kurds have celebrated their independence on Nawroz (March 21) by lighting bonfires. The fire is a symbol of their freedom from the tyrant.

What is True Freedom?

Tyrants have terrorized and persecuted their own people almost since the beginning of time. Modern tyrants include:

- Benito Mussolini (ruled Italy 1922-1943)
- Joseph Stalin (ruled the Soviet Union 1922-1953)
- Adolf Hitler (ruled Germany 1933-1945)
- Fidel Castro (ruled Cuba 1959-2006)
- Saddam Hussein (ruled Iraq 1979-2003)

You'll read about an ancient tyrant – Pharaoh, king of Egypt – in the story on page 3. He ruled Egypt during the time that the prophet Moses rescued the Jews (Israelites) from Pharaoh (about 1440 B.C.).

“Power tends to corrupt. Absolute power corrupts absolutely.”

“Saddam seldom based his military strategy on logic, national interest, or least of all, genuine national defense. As in everything else, his tactics were centered on whatever would benefit him personally or exalt his reputation and authority in the region. He was interested only in his own glory and power...” (page 13, *Saddam's Secrets*, Iraqi General Georges Sada with Jim Nelson Black, © 2006)

As you rebuild your country, always remember that you need to build on the unselfish foundation of love.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor’ and ‘hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemy and pray for those who

persecute you, so that you may be like your Father in heaven, since he causes the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Even the tax collectors do the same, don't they? And if you only greet your brothers, what more do you do? Even the Gentiles do the same, don't they? So then, be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” - Matthew 5:43-48

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Until you - the people of Iraq - genuinely love your neighbors, you will never have true political freedom. Until Behdini Kurds, Sorani Kurds, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Yezidis, Turkoman, Sunni Arabs, and Shiite Arabs learn to genuinely love each other, Iraq will never be free. Until the leaders of Iraq put their selfish ambitions behind them and think more about empowering and educating the “small” people of Iraq instead of thinking about themselves and what they can buy next for themselves, there will never be true political freedom in Iraq.

Freedom starts with individuals. Don't wait until “someone else” loves and serves his neighbor. You love and serve your neighbor. Start today.

Do what one of the American presidents suggested: “Ask not what my country can do for me, but what I can do for my country.” (John F. Kennedy)

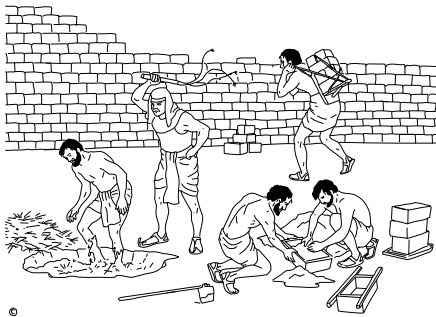
“The nation of Iraq, like all those in the Middle East or elsewhere that operate in an atmosphere of corruption, had been weakened by hatred, suspicion, and fear—all the worst emotions. ... But thank God, the structure erected by Saddam and the Baathis has collapsed, and Saddam is gone—because it was an empire built on shifting sands. And as the Bible tells us, only a house built on solid rock can stand.”

- Georges Sada, retired Iraqi General and fighter pilot, 2006

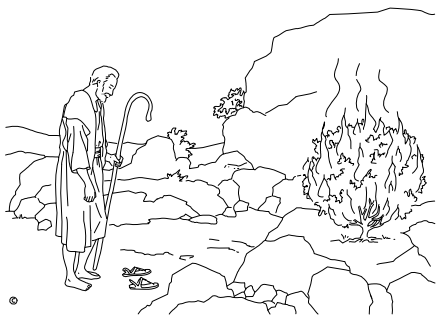
Moses and the Passover

Moses

After the prophet Joseph died, the Israelites were slaves in Egypt for about 400 years. Then God raised up the prophet Moses to save the Israelites from the Egyptians and from their slavery.



God spoke to Moses on Mount Horeb through a bush that burned but did not burn up and said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.



The LORD said, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt. I have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows. I have come down to deliver them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up from that land to a land that is both good and spacious. So now go, and I will send you to Pharaoh

to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt."

God said to Moses, "I AM that I AM." And he said, "You must say this to the Israelites, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" God also said to Moses, "You must say this to the Israelites, 'The LORD – the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob – has sent me to you. This is my name forever, and this is my memorial from generation to generation.'

You must go to the king of Egypt and tell him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. So now, let us go three days' journey into the wilderness, so that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.' But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go, not even under force. So I will extend my hand and strike Egypt with all my wonders that I will do among them, and after that he will release you.

So the LORD said to Moses, "See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron will be your prophet. You are to speak everything I command you, and your brother Aaron is to tell Pharaoh that he must release the Israelites from his land. But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and although I will multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt, Pharaoh will not listen to you. I will reach into Egypt and bring out my regiments, my people the Israelites, from the land of Egypt with great acts of judgment. Then the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD, when I extend my

hand over Egypt and bring the Israelites out from among them."

And Moses and Aaron did so; they did just as the LORD commanded them. Now Moses was eighty years old and Aaron was eighty-three years old when they spoke to Pharaoh.

The Plagues on Egypt

Nine times Pharaoh refused to grant Moses and Aaron their request to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. Each time Pharaoh refused, God sent terrible plagues to Egypt and upon the Egyptians. These were the plagues:

(1) *First the Nile River turned to blood. The fish died, the water stank, and the Egyptians were unable to drink water from the Nile. There was blood everywhere – even in wooden and stone containers. All the Egyptians dug around the Nile for water to drink, because they could not drink the water of the Nile.*

(2) *After that the Nile River swarmed with frogs, and they covered the land of Egypt. They were everywhere – in houses, bedrooms, on beds, in ovens, and in kneading troughs. After Moses prayed, the frogs died out of the houses, the villages, and the fields. The Egyptians piled them in countless heaps, and the land stank.*

(3) *The third plague was gnats. All the dust of the ground became gnats throughout all the land of Egypt.*

(4) *Next God sent a thick swarm of*

flies, and the whole land of Egypt was ruined because of the flies. However, this time the plague did not affect the land of Goshen where the Israelites lived. Pharaoh begged Moses to pray again, so he did, and the LORD did as Moses asked – he removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people. Not one remained! But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also and did not release the people.

(5) *The fifth plague was the death of all the horses, donkeys, camels, herds, and flocks of the Egyptians from a terrible disease. However, none of the Israelites' livestock became diseased or died because God protected them.*

(6) *The sixth plague was boils.* Moses threw soot from a furnace into the air, and it caused festering boils to break out on both people and animals.

(7) *The seventh plague was a destructive storm.* The LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire fell to the earth. Hail fell and fire mingled with the hail; the hail was so severe that there had not been any like it in all the land of Egypt since it had become a nation. The hail struck everything in the open fields, both people and animals, throughout all the land of Egypt. The hail struck everything that grows in the field, and it broke all the trees of the field to pieces. Only in the land of Goshen, where the Israelites lived, was there no hail. So Pharaoh's heart remained hard, and he did not release the Israelites, as the LORD had predicted through Moses.

(8) *The eighth plague was locusts.* Locusts covered the surface of all the ground, so that the ground became dark with them, and they

ate all the vegetation of the ground and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left. Nothing green remained on the trees or on anything that grew in the fields throughout the whole land of Egypt.

(9) *The ninth plague was a thick darkness throughout the land of Egypt for three days. No one could see another person, and no one could rise from his place for three days. But the Israelites had light in the places where they lived.*

(10) *The tenth plague was the death of men and boys and animals who were the firstborn in their families.*

The LORD said to Moses, "I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt; after that he will release you from this place.

Moses said [to the people], "Thus says the LORD: 'About midnight I will go throughout Egypt, and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt will die, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, to the firstborn son of the slave girl who is at her hand mill, and all the firstborn of the cattle. There will be a great cry throughout the whole land of Egypt, such as there has never been, nor ever will be again. But against any of the Israelites not even a dog will bark against either people or animals, so that you may know that the LORD distinguishes between Egypt and Israel.' All these your servants will come down to me and bow down to me, saying, 'Go, you and all the people who follow you,' and after that I will go out." Then Moses went out from Pharaoh in great anger.

The LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh will not listen to you, so that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt."

So Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh, but the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not release the Israelites from his land.

The Passover

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, "This month is to be your beginning of months; it will be your first month of the year. Tell the whole community of Israel, 'In the tenth day of this month they each must take a lamb for themselves according to their families – a lamb for each household. Your lamb must be perfect, a male, one year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. You must care for it until the fourteenth day of this month, and then the whole community of Israel will kill it around sundown.



They will take some of the blood and put it on the two side posts and top of the doorframe of the houses where they will eat it. They will eat the meat the same night; they will eat it roasted over the fire with bread made without yeast and with bitter herbs. Do not eat it raw or boiled in water, but roast it over the fire with its head, its legs, and its entrails. You must leave nothing until morning, but you must burn with fire whatever remains of it until morning. This is how you are to eat it – dressed to travel, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. You are to eat it in

haste. It is the LORD'S Passover.

I will pass through the land of Egypt in the same night, and I will attack all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both of humans and of animals, and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment. I am the LORD. The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are, so that when I see the blood I will pass over you, and this plague will not fall on you to destroy you when I attack the land of Egypt.

This day will become a memorial for you, and you will celebrate it as a festival to the LORD – you will celebrate it perpetually as a lasting ordinance.

Then Moses summoned all the elders of Israel, and told them, "Go and select for yourselves a lamb or young goat for your families, and kill the Passover animals. Take a branch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and apply to the top of the doorframe and the two side posts some of the blood that is in the basin. Not one of you is to go out the door of his house until morning. For the LORD will pass through to strike Egypt, and when he sees the blood on the top of the doorframe and the two side posts, then the LORD will pass over the door, and he will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses to strike you. You must observe this event as an ordinance for you and for your children forever. When you enter the land that the LORD will give to you, just as he said, you must observe this ceremony. When your children ask you, 'What does this ceremony mean to you?' – then you will say, 'It is the sacrifice of the LORD'S Passover, when he passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt, when he struck Egypt and delivered our

households.'" The people bowed down low to the ground, and the Israelites went away and did exactly as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron.

The Deliverance from Egypt



It happened at midnight – the LORD attacked all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the prison, and all the firstborn of the cattle. Pharaoh got up in the night, along with all his servants and all Egypt, and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was no house in which there was not someone dead. Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron in the night and said, "Get up, get out from among my people, both you and the Israelites! Go, serve the LORD as you have requested! Also, take your flocks and your herds, just as you have requested, and leave. But bless me also."

The Israelites journeyed from Rameses to Sukkoth. There were about 600,000 men on foot, plus their dependants. A mixed multitude also went up with them, and flocks and herds – a very large

number of cattle. They baked cakes of bread without yeast using the dough they had brought from Egypt, for it was made without yeast – because they were thrust out of Egypt and were not able to delay, they could not prepare food for themselves either.

The Law of the Firstborn

The LORD spoke to Moses: "Set apart to me every firstborn male – the first offspring of every womb among the Israelites, whether human or animal; it is mine."

Moses said to the people, "Remember this day on which you came out from Egypt, from the place where you were enslaved. In the future, when your son asks you 'What is this?' you are to tell him, 'With a mighty hand the LORD brought us out from Egypt, from the land of slavery. When Pharaoh stubbornly refused to release us, the LORD killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of people to the firstborn of animals. That is why I am sacrificing to the LORD the first male offspring of every womb, but all my firstborn sons I redeem.' It will be for a sign on your hand and for frontlets on your forehead, for with a mighty hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt."

- Exodus 3:6-8, 10, 14-15, 18-20; 7:1-7, 24; 8:14, 17, 31-32; 9:10, 23-24-26, 35; 10:15, 22-23; 11:1, 4-10; 12:1-3, 5-14, 21-32, 37-39; 13:1-3, 14-16

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Language Learning and Teaching

Grammar Substitution Drills. Learn or teach English grammar by focusing on just one area at a time. Use “substitution drills” to reinforce the lesson. Then practice what you’ve learned by talking with some native speaker friends.

In a “substitution drill” you focus on only one part of the sentence at a time and substitute different words for the original word. This forms several slightly different sentences. Say all of the sentences out loud. This will help you develop fluency and practice “getting it right”.

You can also make cards with words or pictures to represent the parts of the sentence.

Below are some examples of substitution drills for the sentence *Yesterday I went to the market.*

Make cards to represent the parts of the sentence. This will help you visualize the sentence structure.

time	subject	verb	preposition	location
------	---------	------	-------------	----------

Yesterday I went to the market.

This sentence has five parts: time, subject, verb, preposition, location. Each part can be substituted.

You could draw pictures (instead of writing words) on cards to help you make substitutions, too. For example, to represent the “location” words:

- draw some fruit (to represent the market)
- draw a bridge
- draw a cross (to represent the church)
- draw a medical cross (to represent the hospital)
- draw a book or school house (to represent the school)

You could use a calendar to help you visualize the “time” substitutions.

You could draw stick figures in action to represent the “verbs”.

Follow the drill patterns modeled in the column on the right.

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time - Substitute the “time” word, which is usually the first or the last part of the sentence.

Yesterday	I went to the market.
This morning	
Last night	
The day before yesterday	
Last week	

subject - Substitute the “subject”.

Yesterday	I	went to the market.
	you	
	he	
	she	
	David	
	we	
	they	

location - Substitute the “location” (e.g., the object of the preposition *to*).

Yesterday I went to		the market.
		the bridge.
		church.
		the hospital.
		school.

verb and **preposition** - Substitute the “verb” and the “preposition”.

Yesterday I	went	to	the market.
	returned	from	
	sat	in	
	stayed	at	
	shopped		

If you **negate** the sentences, you use *did + not + simple verb*:

Yesterday I	didn't	go	to	the market.
	didn't	return	from	
	didn't	sit	in	
	didn't	stay	at	
	didn't	shop		
	didn't			

question - If you turn the sentence into a question, you move the “time” word to the end and put the “question” word first. Use “*did*” + simple verb:

How	did you		go	to	the market yesterday?
What time			return	from	
With whom			sit	in	
Why			stay	at	
			shop		

Alphabet

A, a **Australia**



J, j **Jordan**



S, s **sunflower**



B, b **bicycle**



K, k **kangaroo**



T, t **tomato**



C, c **camel**



L, l **lemon**



U, u **umbrella**



D, d **dress**



M, m **monkey**



V, v **van**



E, e **eye**



N, n **nurse**



W, w **watermelon**



F, f **fox**



O, o **old**



X, x **x-ray**



G, g **guard**



P, p **porcupine**



Y, y **yawn**



H, H **hotel**



Q, q **queen**



Z, z **zebra**



I, i **Iraq**



R, r **rope**



Shepherds

This picture was painted by Sheerwan Fiseen, 2003.

