

# Lesson 32: God Parts the Red Sea

Exodus 13:1 - 14:31 (pg. 64-65, Gospel Story Bible)

## Teaching Points:

**Remember the Passover** — On the day the Israelites leave Egypt, Moses speaks to them on God's behalf. He wants the Israelites to never forget how God helped them to escape from Egypt, so he does two things to help them remember.

He tells them to keep observing the Passover year after year. He also tells them that when they enter the Promised Land they are to kill a lamb for every firstborn son. In this way the sons shall be "redeemed." This is to remind Israel how God spared them from the final plague in Egypt.

God wanted Passover to be the most important time of the year for the Israelites. This is because he had planned something like the Passover, only much more wonderful. That plan was that one day the Redeemer, the Messiah, the Savior, died to save people from eternal death. Jesus became the ultimate Passover lamb.

**Be ready to go** — Moses had told the Israelites to celebrate the Passover all dressed and ready as if they were about to go on a journey. The people obeyed Moses and did as he said. They did not know that while they were still wearing the Passover clothes, Pharaoh would tell Moses that the Israelites must leave Egypt. Pharaoh must have been amazed at how quickly all those people were able to go into the wilderness!

Now, we read that Pharaoh quickly changes his mind about letting the people go. He begins to chase after them with his army and six hundred chariots. If the people had not been ready to leave Egypt quickly, they probably would not have been able to leave at all.

**Trust in the Lord** — When the Israelites see that the Egyptians have caught up to them, they are afraid. But Moses is brave. He commands the Israelites not to fear but to trust God to help them.

God puts a pillar of cloud between the Egyptians and the Israelites. The cloud stays there all night. While the cloud protects the Israelites from Pharaoh and his army, God begins to work through Moses to part the Red Sea that stands in the way of the Israelites. In the morning, the Israelites cross the sea on dry ground. When they reach the other side, the Egyptians are crossing the sea, chasing after them. God works through Moses to close up the sea, and all of Pharaoh's army is drowned.

Not only does God save his people, Israel, He destroys their enemy forever. In the same way, God's Son, Jesus, will save us and destroy our enemy, death, forever.

## Where is the Gospel?

**How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?**

Read Exodus 14:8-9; Romans 9:17.

In these passages, we learn something more about God's purposes. Paul tells us in Romans that it was God who put Pharaoh on the throne of Egypt. He also tells us why. He did it to show his power through the life of Pharaoh, so that God's name would be proclaimed in all the earth.

The story of the parting of the Red Sea has been told millions of times, but often the most important part of the story is not mentioned. Because the Israelites escaped from Pharaoh's army, one day a child named Jesus was born in Bethlehem to the nation of Israel. To this day, God's name is proclaimed through the life of Pharaoh and the story of how God parted the Red Sea.

## Bible Truth:

Nothing can stop God's plan of salvation.

## Object Lessons:

### 1. Be Ready To Go (Grades K-2)

**Supplies:** (Use the gym if desired)

- four three-foot lengths of rope
- four large sticks or poles to be used as walking staffs
- four towels to represent cloaks
- prizes for the entire class (optional)

Read Exodus 12:11 and explain to the children that God wanted his people ready to go at a moment's notice. Then play the following game:

Divide the class into two teams and line them up for a relay race. Call one team "Prepared to Go" and a second team, "Just Sitting Around." Give "Prepared to Go" two ropes, two sticks, and two towels, having them dress their first two players in line so they are prepared to go. Place the rest of the items for "Just Sitting Around" off to the side of the room and have that team all sit down.

When you say, "Go," each team's first two members must put on the costumes, run to the other side of the room, return to the line, and give their items to the next people. The first team to have all their members complete the task wins. Because they have two teammates ready to go beforehand, "Prepared to Go" will obviously have a head start.

Use this to help the children see that God had a very detailed plan on how he was going to save Israel. After the last plague when Pharaoh gave the word to allow the Israelites to leave Egypt, God's people were all ready to go. Imagine what it would be like for all of Israel to begin an immediate evacuation within minutes.

Note: If you choose to present a prize to the winner, consider one for each of the children on both teams.

### 2. Unbelief Leads to Complaining (Grades 3-5)

**Supplies:**

- a Bible

Read Exodus 14:11–12, Israel's response to the approaching Egyptians.

Then ask the class the following questions:

▪ When the Egyptians began to close in on the Israelites, they began to complain and say odd things. What were some of these? (The Israelites said that they had told Moses to leave them in Egypt and assumed that they were now going to die in the wilderness. The truth is that they all came along freely with Moses.)

▪ In what situations might we complain when things don't go our way? (We usually complain when we don't get what we want. The Israelites demonstrated their love of comfort. They wanted to follow God as long as it did not require anything of them. We can have a similar posture, being willing to follow God as long as it does not cost us anything.)

▪ How was God's grace demonstrated to the Israelites in spite of their complaining? (The Israelites could have been judged for not trusting in God but instead were protected by God. Similarly we are spared, protected, and saved by the grace of God made available to us through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.)

Invite the children to share stories from their lives when they fell into the sin of complaining. Try to help them understand how we are just like the Israelites.

### A Little Bit More (grades 3-5) - Angel of God

The Angel of God is no ordinary angel but the manifestation of God himself. After wrestling with the Angel of God, Jacob declared that he had seen God face to face (Genesis 32:30). The Angel of the Lord also appeared to Moses and again spoke as God. The Angel of God was in the pillar of cloud that moved from in front of Israel to behind them to shield them from their pursuers.