

# Crossing the Red Sea



## Scripture Reference:

[Exodus 13:17-14:31](#) and [Exodus 15:1-21](#)

**Suggested Emphasis:** God is powerful and He can change the laws of nature to protect His people.

**Memory Verse:** “And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.”

[Philippians 4:19, NIV](#)



Background  
Study



Story  
Introduction



Telling  
the Story



Review  
Questions



Songs



Learning  
Activities



Other Online  
Resources

## Story Overview:

God’s people were finally on their way to their own land—Canaan! A pillar of cloud led the way by day and a pillar of fire guided them at night. As the Israelites arrived at the edge of the Red Sea, Pharaoh and his army caught up with them. Pharaoh had changed his mind yet again! The Lord protected his frightened people. The pillar of cloud moved between the Israelites and the Egyptian army. Moses then stretched his hand across the sea and the Lord caused a great wind to part the water and hold it back while the estimated two million Israelites passed through. When the Egyptians followed them, the Lord caused the water to flood and kill all of them.

## Background Study:

Because Pharaoh wouldn’t let Israel go, the firstborn sons in every Egyptian family were killed. God “passed over” His people, and none of them died. The Egyptians then urged the Israelites to leave quickly. They were so anxious to see them leave that they gave them gold, silver, and clothing to take with them. Moses took the bones of Joseph with them as they left. Joseph had made the Israelites swear to do this four hundred years before ([Genesis 47:29-30](#); [Exodus 13:19](#)). The Israelites had been in Egypt 430 years.

When the Hebrew people left Egypt, God did not leave them to find their own way to Canaan. He led them in the most strategic path and provided a tall, vertical pillar of cloud to lead them by day and a pillar of fire to guide them at night. An angel of God moved in and out of these pillars as needed.

Pharaoh and the Egyptian people had begged God's people to leave Egypt but now, as they watched a large labour force being forced leaving the country, they changed their minds ([Exodus 12:31-33](#) versus [Exodus 14:5](#)). Pharaoh rallied all of his chariots and chased after them.

In what will become a common thread in the years to come the people begin to doubt Moses and God.

*Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still."*  
*Exodus 14:13-14 NIV*

We don't know exactly where the Israelites crossed the Red Sea. The Hebrew text calls it the Sea of Reeds. Wherever the crossing took place it involved an amount of water significant enough that the Israelites were frightened by it and the entire Egyptian army could drown in it.

Based on the fact that there were 600,000 fighting men ([Exodus 12:37-38](#)) the entire number of Israelites who left Egypt could be estimated at near two million people. They would also have had millions of animals. The crossing would have taken several hours, even if the path had been a half-mile wide! Had the Egyptians known what was happening, they might have attacked, but the angel moved to the back of the group along with the pillar of cloud and blocked the view. The cloud gave light on the one side for the Israelites to cross yet darkness on the other for the Egyptians.

The Egyptians followed them into the sea. Just before dawn, after the Israelites were safely on the other side of the sea, the Lord caused wheels to come off the Egyptians' chariots and confusion to spread through the army. Before they drowned, the Egyptians knew God was protecting His people. By that time it was too late.

*And when the Israelites saw the mighty hand of the Lord displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant. Exodus 14:31 NIV*

God's power saved His people! In [Exodus 15:1-21](#) we read of Moses and the people celebrating in song to the Lord. Moses' sister, Miriam took up a tambourine and led the women in dancing.



[Previous Lesson](#)



[Next Lesson](#)



[List of all lessons on this website](#)

---

[top](#)

# Way to Introduce the Story:

Use books from the Public Library to show pictures of Egyptian armies. You will find chariots in many of them. Just have fun discussing life in Egypt in general. Talk about how that it would have been a lot different living in Egypt as a slave instead of royalty. Discuss what the Israelites might miss and what they might not miss from Egypt as they left.

[top](#)

## The Story:

God's people, the Israelites, had been slaves in Egypt for 430 years! Now they were finally free to leave and go make a home in their very own land.

God had chosen Moses as their leader so they packed everything they owed and followed him out of Egypt. Over a million Israelites set off. Moses always knew which direction to go because God put a big tall pillar of cloud in front of them to point the way. At night they followed a big tall pillar of fire. They never got lost because God always showed the correct way to go.

Eventually, the pillar stopped by the water called the Red Sea. The Israelites camped by water and waited for what God wanted them to do next.

Meanwhile, back in Egypt, the Pharaoh and his officials began thinking about how all of the Israelites had left. God had proven, through the ten plagues, that he was more powerful than the King of Egypt and all of the Egyptian gods. At that time Pharaoh and the people had told the Israelites to leave Egypt but now they were having second thoughts. If all the slaves left Egypt, they thought, then who would do all the work?

So Pharaoh decided to chase after the Israelites and make them come back. He sent all of his horses and chariots and all of his horsemen and troops. He must have thought, "NO ONE would be able to stop this army!" When God's people saw the Egyptian army approaching in the distance they became very afraid. There was nowhere to go to get away. The army was behind them and the Red Sea was in front of them. They were trapped!

The people complained to their leader, Moses. They said, "Why did you lead us out of Egypt into the desert to die? We would have been better off to have stayed in Egypt!" But Moses said, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see how God will save you today. The Egyptians can never win because God will fight for you."

Now amazing things began to happen right before their very eyes. The people had thought that they were trapped because of the water. But they were about to see that God is so powerful he can do anything!

An angel of God had been travelling in front of the Israelites and he moved back behind them along with the pillar of cloud. The cloud blocked the view of the Egyptians and they could only see night and darkness.

But the cloud provided light for God's people so they could see everything. They could see the Red Sea in front of them and wished they could get across the sea to safety.

At God's command Moses stretched out his big staff (stick) over the water and it began to change.

A strong wind blew the water up into two walls so that there were walls of water on each side and dry land down the middle. God had provided a way to cross the sea to the other side!

When the Egyptians saw the dry land they followed the Israelites. Do you think they caught up with them? No, they did not. Strange things began happening to them. The wheels of their chariots began falling off and it became very difficult to drive. By the time the Egyptians realized God was fighting against them it was too late.

Now that the Israelites were all safely on the other side God told Moses to stretch his staff over the water again. Soon all of the Egyptian army was drowned in the water.

The people were so happy that God had save them from their enemies. Moses wrote a song about what happened and everyone sang it. And Moses' sister, Meriam sang another part of the song. Then she got a tambourine and began to dance. Soon all of the women were dancing with joy for all God had done that day. If you were one of the people there would you join in the celebration?

[top](#)

## Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using a variety of methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection, student interaction and/or emotion. [Click here for visual aids and story-telling methods.](#)

[Download the slideshow](#) or [download the pictures to print.](#)

Each teacher is unique so only use the illustrations that best relate to the way YOU are telling the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

## Review Questions:

1. After the tenth plague, did the Egyptians want the Israelites to leave Egypt? Yes
2. How did the Israelites know which direction to go when they left Egypt? They were led by a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night.
3. How did the Israelites get across to the other side of the Red Sea? God told Moses to hold his staff (shepherd's rod) over the sea. Then God caused a strong wind to hold back the water so they could cross.
4. What happened when the Egyptian army tried to cross the sea? They became confused, the wheels fell off their chariots, and the water came down on them and drowned them.

## Song Suggestions:

- [My God is So Big Song](#)
- [God is Listening When We Pray \(Song\) English/Cebuano](#)
- [Joy Songs](#)
- [My God is So Big!](#)
- [He's Got the Whole World in His Hands,](#)
- Refer to the [Song Page](#) on this website for more options.

## Learning Activities and Crafts:

[\(How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation\)](#)

*Activities:*

- Show a map and the possible site of the crossing.
- Encourage the children to celebrate God’s power over Pharaoh through song and dance just like the people of Israel did ([Exodus 15:20-21](#)). Perhaps sing using some of the words of Exodus 15. Lead the children in thinking about what a celebration dance might have looked like and then let them dance. Another idea is to call out various reasons to celebrate and let the children perform “dance moves” that depict this (God sent the 10 plagues—each plague could have a move, preparing for the Passover, leaving Egypt at night, etc.)
- Use play-dough to make a model of today’s story.
- Discuss the memory verse. Write the words of the verse on cards—one word per card. Have the children put them in order to help learn the verse.

*Crafts:*

- Have children draw two large “clouds” or pillars on a piece of paper. Glue cotton wool on one and paper strips (red, orange, yellow) on the other.
- For something different, cut a fish shape out of paper and use it as a puppet. Let the fish puppet tell the story from his point of view.

Check the [Teaching Ideas](#) page on this website for ideas that are adaptable to any lesson.



[Click here for “Crossing the Red Sea” printables to print \(A4 paper\)](#)  
[Click here for “Crossing the Red Sea” printables to print \(Letter size-USA\)](#)

[top](#)

## Other Online Resources:

- [Leaving Egypt colouring page & puzzle worksheets \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Crossing the Red Sea colouring page & puzzle worksheets \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [The Red Sea colouring page \(Christian Answers\)](#)
- [Colouring page of Moses at the parted sea \(Bible-Printables\)](#)
- [The journey of Moses and the Hebrews out of Egypt \(Bible-Printables\)](#)

<https://www.pinterest.com/marynnz/moses-birth-through-leaving-egypt/>  
[top](#)



©Mission Bible Class 2011-2022 Copies may be made for personal and ministry purposes only. Not to be sold or profited from in any way. [www.missionbibleclass.org](http://www.missionbibleclass.org)