



UNIT 4 | SESSION 3

# GOD PARTED THE RED SEA

EXODUS 13-15

**KEY PASSAGE:**

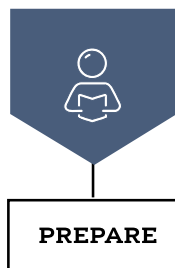
Numbers 23:19

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:**

Does God keep His promises? Yes, God always keeps His promises because He is faithful.

**CHRIST CONNECTION:**

Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, and God provided a way for them to escape through the Red Sea. The Bible says that Jesus is greater than Moses. (Hebrews 3:3) People who trust in Jesus escape the penalty of sin and have eternal life.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



## LEADER Bible Study

God’s people were finally free. After 430 years of slavery in Egypt, the Israelites—now numbering 600,000 men plus their families—were on their way out with Moses as their leader. God had promised to give them a new land: “a land flowing with milk and honey” (Ex. 3:17).

What did sudden freedom feel like? Did the Israelites feel strong and courageous? Did they feel nervous and vulnerable? Regardless of their thoughts and emotions, one thing was certain: God was with them.

We see in the story of Exodus 13–15 that God directed His people, fought for His people, and ultimately delivered His people.

First, God directed His people. We see this clearly in God’s choice of the route for the Israelites. God knew if the Israelites took the road into the land of the Philistines, they would face war and decide to go back to Egypt. So God led them toward the Red Sea. He knew Pharaoh would pursue them.

Would Pharaoh stop God’s plans? No. On the contrary, the threat of Pharaoh and his army would bring God glory and cause the Egyptians to know that the God of the Israelites is the Lord.

The Egyptians pursued the Israelites, and God fought for His people. Imagine the Israelites’ fear in seeing their oppressors

approaching. They were terrified! First, they cried out to God for help. Then they turned to Moses with accusations. Had Moses brought them there to die? Moses was confident: “Don’t be afraid. ... The LORD will fight for you” (Ex. 14:13-14).

And He did. God parted the waves of the Red Sea for the Israelites to walk through. When the Egyptians followed, God threw them into confusion and let the waters crash back over them.

God delivered His people. The Israelites saw God’s power and did what Pharaoh and the Egyptians refused to do: They feared the Lord. Exodus 15 records their song to God, reflecting on His power and faithful love for His people.

In an even greater display of His power and faithful love, God provided His Son, Jesus. Jesus is greater than Moses.

Through faith in Jesus, God delivers us from sin and death.

### PLACES TO KNOW

**Red Sea:** The Hebrew words for “Red Sea” are *Yam Suph*, which can be translated as “Sea of Reeds.” When the algae that grow in the Red Sea die, the sea becomes a reddish-brown.

## WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

**SAY** “ What’s the biggest body of water you have visited—maybe it was an ocean, a river, a lake, or a gigantic swimming pool? What was it like? ”

### 2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

#### OPTION 1: RED SEA SCIENCE



Pour milk into a shallow dish or plate, covering the bottom. Allow a volunteer to squirt several drops of red food color into the milk near the center of the dish. (Tip: If your group is large, simultaneously conduct multiple experiments with smaller groups.)

Ask another volunteer to dip the end of a cotton swab into dish soap. Then instruct her to press the end of the soapy swab into the center of the plate. Point out how the color rushes to the edges of the dish.

**SAY** “ That was really cool! Today we are going to hear a story from the Bible about a time God’s people, the Israelites, stood at the edge of the Red Sea. They needed to get across. Miraculously, God parted the water. Let’s find out what happened. ”

#### OPTION 2: CROSS THE SEA GAME



Clear an area on the floor to set up a miniature golf game. Use painter’s tape to mark the boundaries of the green and position a plastic cup on its side as the hole.

Position obstacles on the green, blocking the direct path to the “hole.” Provide a golf ball and small putter or yardstick.

Challenge a volunteer to putt the ball into the cup. Count how many putts a player requires to get the ball into the cup. Allow other kids a turn.

**SAY** “ We can’t always see a path around the obstacles in front of us. In today’s Bible story, we will see what God did for the Israelites when they were trapped between the Red Sea and the approaching Egyptians. ”

## INTRODUCE the Bible Story

### 1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (2 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

**SAY** “ Welcome, everyone! I am so glad you are here. I’m [your name]. Hold up your Bible if you have it today. [Provide Bibles for kids who need one.] The Bible is God’s Word. It tells us the wonderful story of ... what? [Let kids respond.] It tells us the wonderful story of God’s plan to rescue sinners.

We study the Bible because it is one way we can know God. He is a faithful promise-keeper. The more you know Him, the more you will love Him. He gives us His Word so we can know what is true. I am so excited for you to hear today’s Bible story. ”

### 2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

**SAY** “ We’ve been talking a lot about God’s promises lately. Our big picture question is, **Does God keep His promises?** [Allow kids to respond.] **Yes, God always keeps His promises because He is faithful.** We are learning that God’s faithfulness is part of His character. Even many years after God made a promise, He kept it.

Let’s say our big picture question and answer together. **Does God keep His promises? Yes, God always keeps His promises because He is faithful.** ”



LEARN

## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### LEARN the Bible Story

#### 1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Exodus 13–15. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “God Parted the Red Sea.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

#### GOD PARTED THE RED SEA

“Moses quickly led God’s people—the Israelites—out of Egypt. God guided Moses and the Israelites toward the Red Sea and the wilderness. As they traveled, God went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud during the day. At night, God was in a pillar of fire.

God told Moses to set up camp near the sea. God knew Pharaoh was going to change his mind and chase after the Israelites, and God had a plan to prove to the Israelites that He is the one true God.

Sure enough, Pharaoh got into his chariot, and he and his army pursued the Israelites. They caught up with God’s people, who were camping near the sea.

The Israelites saw the Egyptians coming, and they were afraid. “We are going to die!” they shouted. “We should never have left Egypt!”

But Moses said, “Don’t be afraid. God brought you here, and He will fight for you.”

As the Egyptians got closer, God told Moses what to do: “Stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide it so the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground.” God moved behind the Israelites to hold back the Egyptians for the night. In the morning, Moses stretched out his hand and divided the sea. The Israelites walked through with walls of water on both sides.

But the Egyptians chased after them. As soon as the Israelites were safely on the other side of the sea, Moses stretched out his hand again. The waters crashed down, covering the Egyptians and killing all of Pharaoh’s army.

When the Israelites saw what had happened, they feared God and believed that He had sent Moses to lead them. Moses and the Israelites sang a song to the Lord. “The LORD is my strength and my song,” they said. “He has become my salvation.”

Christ Connection: Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, and God provided a way for them to escape through the Red Sea. The Bible says that Jesus is greater than Moses. (Hebrews 3:3) People who trust in Jesus escape the penalty of sin and have eternal life. ”

#### STORYTELLING TIPS

**Match the emotion:** When the Israelites might have felt scared, in awe, or happy in the story, guide the kids to make a face that matches that emotion.

**Use hand motions:** Whenever kids hear the word “God,” instruct them to make the sign language motion for God. Hold your hand perpendicular to your body and draw a line from over your head down your center.



### 2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

**SAY** “ Open your Bibles to Exodus 13:17. [Choose a volunteer to read the verse aloud.] God knew the Israelites would give up if they went the short way back to Canaan and faced new enemies there. Even though going by the Red Sea wasn't as direct, God sent the Israelites that way for their good.

God also knew that Pharaoh would change his mind. Look at Exodus 14:1-4. [Choose a volunteer to read the verses aloud.] Despite all of the plagues God sent and the miracles He displayed through Moses and Aaron, Pharaoh still refused to submit to the Lord as the one true God. So God performed another miracle. With the Israelites caught between water and the Egyptians, they had nowhere to escape until God provided a way. The Egyptians thought they could recapture the Israelites. Even when the sea parted, their pride and arrogance led them to chase the Israelites, and they faced the consequences for their sin. They were destroyed by the sea.

Before the Israelites knew how God would provide, they were afraid. God comforted them through Moses. Find Exodus 14:13-14. [Choose a volunteer to read the verses aloud.] The Israelites didn't have to be afraid because God fought for them. He is the all-powerful promise-keeper. ”

### 3 CHRIST CONNECTION

**SAY** “ Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, and God provided a way for them to escape through the Red Sea. The Bible says that Jesus is greater than Moses. (Hebrews 3:3) People who trust in Jesus escape the penalty of sin and have eternal life. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

#### 2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

| **SAY** “ How did the Israelites respond to God's rescuing them through the Red Sea? ”

Lead kids to discuss how the Israelites worshiped God. They sang, danced, and played instruments. They told about God's power and all He had done. Consider pointing kids to Exodus 15 and reading the praises of the Israelites.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Ex. 15:21.)

| **SAY** “ What reasons do we have to worship God? ”

Encourage kids to share other things they know God has done, either through reading Scripture or in their own lives. Recognize God's power and authority. Point out that kids can worship God by singing songs, dancing in thankfulness, or writing poems and stories that tell of His wonderful works. God is honored when we worship Him and teach others to worship Him too.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Ps. 57:7.)

| **SAY** “ How does the story of the Red Sea crossing remind us of Jesus? ”

Tell kids that when we tell people about Jesus, we can invite them to trust in Jesus. Trusting in Jesus is like crossing the Red Sea from death in sin to life and salvation in the promised land of God's kingdom.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 2 Cor. 1:3-4.)