

Lesson 2: The Red Sea

Bible Reading:

Exodus 14:1-25; 15:20-21

Key Verse:

The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground.
– Exodus 14:22

The Point:

God gives freedom.



Activities & Supplies

Opening

Trapped

Work together to get free.

15 min.

- Bible

Stations

Storytelling

Rescue at the Red Sea

Reenact the story with actions and sounds.

20 min.

- Bible
- Activity Sheet A
- Blue bed sheets, table cloths, or fabric
- White sheet or poster board
- Staff or stick
- Optional: various costume items, card stock and marker, blue construction paper

Craft

Crossing the Red Sea

Create the crossing.

20 min.

- Air-drying clay
- Pencils or toothpicks
- Paper plates
- Markers
- Large, zippered bags
- Optional: table covering



Stations

<p>Science Pepper and Water Separate pepper from water.</p>	<p>20 min.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plates or low dishes that will hold water• Pitchers of water• Ground pepper• Dish soap• Cupcake papers• Napkins
<p>Games This Way Out Circle game of a way out.</p> <p>Ping Pong Play Separate air.</p>	<p>20 min.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bandanas• Ping pong balls• Paper plates• Red permanent marker• Large containers• Tape• Dance music• Music player



Stations

Snack

Eat the Story!

Recreate the story with snack ingredients.

20 min.

- Red gelatin
- Snack fish
- Gummy bears
- Pretzel sticks
- Paper plates
- Napkins
- Spoons

Closing Prayer

5 min.

- For the Home



Background for Leaders

The Red Sea

The Point

God gives freedom.

Did You Know?

- The term used in the original Hebrew language in this story calls the body of water the Israelites cross through the “Sea of Reeds” not the Red Sea. The labeling of the sea as the Red Sea came about later. Scholars do not know precisely where this Reed Sea was.
- God’s ability to control the waters of the Red Sea remind us of the creation story where God ordered and separated the chaotic primordial waters in Genesis 1:6-7, 9-10.
- After their forty-year journey in the wilderness, the people of Israel entered the Promised Land by walking on dry land as the Jordan River was parted, reminiscent of this story of the Red Sea.
- The story of God delivering the people from slavery in Egypt, including the crossing of the sea, is celebrated in the Jewish festival of Passover. It is one of the defining stories of Israelite and Jewish identity.
- Unlike many artistic portrayals of this event, the dividing of the sea was not immediate. Instead, it took all night and was done by a strong east wind.
- The apostle Paul compares the crossing of the Red Sea to Christian baptism in 1 Corinthians 10:1-2.

Why It Matters

- When we feel trapped, God brings us to freedom.
- We are called to follow God’s example and work for justice and freedom for all people.
- We can celebrate God’s gift of freedom.

Prayer of Preparation

Gracious God, when we feel trapped, remind us that you have given us the gift of freedom. Calm our hearts and still our souls so that we can see options and alternatives. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.



Lesson Plan

Opening

Trapped

15 min.

Work together to get free.

Supplies:

- Bible

Instructions:

1. This is a different way to do the traditional “Human Knot.”
2. Gather participants into circles of 10-25 people. (Groups as small as five people will work if needed.)
3. Have each group standing, facing towards each other, in a circle. Each person should be standing shoulder to shoulder. **First, everyone needs to lift their left hand and reach across to take the hand of someone standing across the circle.** Pause. **Everyone should lift their right and reach across to take the hand of another person standing across the circle. No one should be holding hands with someone standing next to them.** Pause until all groups are ready.
4. **You will need to communicate and figure out as a group how to untangle the knot, freeing everyone back into a circle of people, without ever letting go of any hands. If any group member lets go of a hand (breaks the chain), then the group must freeze and reconnect.**
5. Set a time limit if you wish to make the game more challenging or if you have a strict schedule.
6. **Be ready to bend, twirl and be as flexible as you can. In the beginning it will be difficult, you will need to think about your other group members and work together to free everyone from the tangled knot.**



7. **While you are trying to unravel your knot, try to be respectful of the boundaries of others. If you find yourself in an uncomfortable position with another player, you might ask if other players can help you out by untangling a different part of the knot.**
8. Note: Some groups may not be able to untangle themselves into a circle, that is okay.
9. When all groups are untangled or the time you set is up, wrap up the activity with:
 - a. **How did it feel to be trapped together?**
 - b. For groups who did NOT untangle, ask, **What does it feel like to work hard and not get free?**
 - c. For groups who untangled, ask, **What did it feel like to be freed?**
10. **Now that you know what it is like to be feel trapped, let's hear an exciting story about Moses and the Israelites being trapped between Pharoah's army and the Red Sea.** Read Exodus 14:1-25.
11. **Wow, that is an exciting story! Now, let's hear what happened after all the Israelites were safe on dry land.** Read Exodus 15:20-21 out loud. **What a great end to the story, the Israelites danced and sang to celebrate!** Invite participants to sing and dance on their way to their next activity.



Stations

Storytelling

20 min.

Rescue at the Red Sea

Reenact the story with actions and sounds.

Supplies:

- Bible
- Activity Sheet A
- Blue bed sheets, table cloths, or fabric
- White sheet or poster board
- Staff or stick
- Optional: various costume items, card stock and marker, blue construction paper

Preparation:

1. Make copies of Activity Sheet A for the narrator and those making sound effects. Optional: make copies for all the actors.
2. This activity can be done without any props or costumes, with more costume elements, or even with silly signs written on card stock identifying items or characters.
3. Groups or pairs of actors portraying the Red Sea will hold up blue bed sheets. These sheets will block the way until God parts the sea. At that time, actors will rotate the sheets to provide a passage through the sea. Optional: instead of using blue bed sheets, actors can hold pieces of blue construction paper.
4. The white sheet can be wrapped around the actor portraying the pillar of cloud. Optional: the actor can hold up a sign of “Pillar of Cloud” written on poster board.



Instructions:

1. **Welcome to Storytelling, let's dig right into our story. Let's hear what happened after all the Israelites were safe on dry land.** Read Exodus 15:20-21 out loud. **What a great end to the story, the Israelites danced and sang to celebrate! Let's act the whole story out.**
2. Ask for volunteers for the roles listed on Activity Sheet A. As many participants who would like to act may; there can be as many Israelites, Egyptian soldiers, and Red Sea actors as you have volunteers. Those who do not wish to act or prefer to can make sound effects.
3. Show the actors who are playing the Red Sea how to hold up the blue materials or construction paper to block the Israelites' movement and then rotate to create a path. Also tell the actors they will mime their actions, only the narrator and those making sound effects are heard.
4. Instruct your "Miriam" to stay with the "Israelites" as they move around during the skit.
5. Ask the narrator to pause after each section to give time for the actions and sound effects.
6. Perform the skit.
7. **What was one thing you noticed during this skit?** Accept all answers.
8. **What were some of the bad times the Israelites experienced in this story?** [*Being enslaved, feeling trapped at the Red Sea.*]
9. **Yes, the Israelites felt trapped both by the Egyptians when they were slaves, but they also felt trapped when they faced the Red Sea with the soldiers right behind them! But what did God do?** [*Rescued them, brought them to freedom.*]
10. **What were some of the good times the Israelites experienced?** [*Eating and drinking in Egypt at the beginning, being told they could leave and leaving, walking through the sea on dry land, celebrating afterward.*]
11. **Break into small groups and share with each other about a time that you felt trapped. How did you get free? Then share with each other about a time when you felt free.**



Craft

20 min.

Crossing the Red Sea

Create the crossing.

Supplies:

- Air-drying clay
- Pencils or toothpicks
- Paper plates
- Markers
- Large, zippered bags
- Optional: table covering

Preparation:

1. Cover tables if you desire.
2. Provide a set of all materials for each participant and place them on small group tables.

Instructions:

1. **The Israelites in our story felt trapped. They needed to cross water to get to the other side for freedom from the Egyptians.**
2. **This paper plate is our dry land.** Hold up paper plate.
3. **Take a big pinch of your clay and make a person.** Demonstrate a simple person shape.
4. **Use your toothpicks to make eyes, mouth and maybe clothes.**
5. **Can your person “walk” across your plate? Try it. Yes! Nothing is in your person’s way to cross the plate.**
6. **Now take a handful of clay and pound it into a big rectangle on your plate. This is the Red Sea.**
7. **Can the people cross the sea?**



8. Use your fingers, toothpicks, or pencils to separate the sea so that there is a path big enough for your person to walk through on the dry land.
9. Try it! Pause. Good job in making a path.
10. What do you think lives in this sea? [*Fish, sharks, seaweed, whales, lobsters, etc.*]
11. Draw in both sides of your sea all the living things we just talked about.
12. What do you think is on the sides of the sea? Allow responses.
13. With your markers, on the sides of the sea draw some of the things we just talked about.
14. You now have a sculpture of our Bible story today.



Science

20 min.

Pepper and Water

Separate pepper from water.

Supplies:

- Plates or low dishes that will hold water
- Pitchers of water
- Ground pepper
- Dish soap
- Cupcake papers
- Napkins

Preparation:

1. Prepare a set of supplies below for yourself and each small group:
 - A small amount of dish soap in cupcake papers
 - Pitcher of water
 - Pepper shakers
 - Plate or low dish for each person
 - Napkins

Instructions:

1. Gather participants around you where they can all see you present the experiment.
2. Pour enough water on the plate to cover the bottom.
3. **The Israelites left Egypt but were blocked by the Red Sea. Pharaoh sent his giant army to bring the Israelites back to Egypt. And the Israelites were caught between the army and the Red Sea. The Israelites were afraid.**
4. Shake pepper all over the water.



5. I am going to put my finger into the water and touch the bottom of the plate.
6. **What happened? Nothing happened! The pepper just stuck to my finger. Hmm. The Israelites were afraid that the Red Sea would cover them completely.**
7. Wipe the pepper from your finger.
8. **But Moses said, “Do not be afraid. Just stand still and watch God save you today. Then Moses raised his staff over the sea, and God opened up a pathway through the water with a strong east wind.**
9. Put a drop of dish soap on the tip of a different finger. Then put your finger into the water again and touch the bottom of the plate. The pepper on top of the water will instantly spread apart.
10. **The people of Israel walked right through the middle of the sea on dry ground, with walls of water on each side!**
11. **When the Israelites reached the other side of the water, God said to Moses, “Raise your staff over the sea again.” When Moses did, the water rushed back, and the Israelites were safe.**
12. **Imagine that—God made the waters of the sea to separate. That is kind of like our pepper trick, but on a giant scale. God is powerful and rescued the people from slavery.**
13. **I would like everyone go back to your small group table and try this experiment yourself. Tell the Bible story out loud as you do.**



Games

10 min.

This Way Out

Circle game of a way out.

Supplies:

- Bandanas

Preparation:

1. Gather one bandana for every two participants.

Instructions:

1. **The Israelites were trapped in slavery and Pharaoh would not free them. How were the Israelites trapped at the Red Sea?** *[Between Pharaoh's army and the sea.]*
2. **How did they get out of being trapped?** *[God showed Moses and the people what to do.]* **Yes, God showed them the way out.**
3. **Everyone, please stand in your small group circle. Choose one person to be in the middle of the circle.**
4. **Everyone in the circle hold the ends of a bandana between you, closing the circle.**
5. **Blindfold the person in the middle.**
6. **Choose two people to represent "the way out" and have them drop the bandana between them. The person in the middle of the circle will try to find the way out of the circle by listening carefully.**
7. **If you are blindfolded in the middle say, "Show me the way."**
8. **Everyone in the circle can talk to your blindfolded person trying to help guide them to the way out.**
9. Play as many rounds as time allows and participants are engaged.
10. Optional: Combine small groups or make one large group with several blindfolded people in the middle.
11. **We sometimes feel like we are trapped. God can show us the way out, too.**



Games

10 min.

Ping Pong Play

Separate air.

Supplies:

- Ping pong balls
- Paper plates
- Red permanent marker
- Large containers
- Tape
- Dance music
- Music player

Preparation:

1. Gather enough ping pong balls so each participant can have six. Mark half of the ping pong balls with a large red X or happy face, placing them in separate containers.
2. Place tape on floor to separate two sides of the space.
3. Have dance music ready to turn on.

Instructions:

1. **Remember that God led Moses and the Israelites through the Red Sea?**
2. **We are going to do an experiment to separate ping pong balls with air.** Hand out paper plates.
3. **Hold your plate on the edge and curve it slightly and wave it to create a fan. Try it!**
4. Divide groups into two teams. **Each person needs to take three ping pong balls of each type and place them on your side of this space.** Tell the teams which side of the tape they should move to.



5. **When I say Go, use only the air from your paper plate fan to separate the color balls on each side. Stay on your side of the tape.**
6. **We want all the red balls on this side and the white ball on this side. Go!**
7. **When balls are all separated: When the Israelites reached the other side of the sea, and they were finally free from slavery—they danced! Miriam, Moses' and Aaron's sister, led the whole group in celebration with music and dance. Now it is our turn to dance.**
8. **Start the music and dance!**



Snack

20 min.

Eat the Story!

Recreate the story with snack ingredients.

Before serving any food check with participants or caregivers for potential allergies, provide an alternative if necessary.

Supplies:

- Red gelatin
- Snack fish
- Gummy bears
- Pretzel sticks
- Paper plates
- Napkins
- Spoons

Preparation:

1. Give each participant napkins and a plate with:
 - Red gelatin (cup or large square)
 - Snack fish (handful each)
 - Gummy bears (handful each)
 - Pretzel stick (one each)
2. Determine how you will distribute supplies—place all on a supply table, set on small group tables before participants arrive, or hand out during activity.



Instructions:

1. **We are going to recreate today's story during snack time today. Please wait until after we pray to eat your treat.** Instruct participants to pick up their supplies or hand them out if necessary.
2. As you give instructions, demonstrate with your own set of supplies. **Take your gummy bears and line them up. These are the Israelites running away from the Egyptians. Choose one bear to be Moses.**
3. **Dump your red gelatin in the middle of your plate. This is the Red Sea.**
4. **Stick the fish into the red sea with your spoon.**
5. **What happened next?**
6. **Moses lifted his staff (pretzel) and the Red Sea parted so that the Israelites could walk through.**
7. **Lift your pretzel and separate your gelatin into two parts and walk all of your gummy bears through to the other side.**
8. **Now that all the Israelites are safe on the other side, Moses lifts his staff again and the waters come back together so that the Egyptians cannot follow.**
9. **Lift your pretzel and push your gelatin sea back together again.**
10. **God rescued the Israelites from Egyptian slavery.**
11. **Now we can eat our story. Let us pray. Repeat after me.**

Dear God, (echo)

Thank you for Jesus. (echo)

Thank you for saving the Israelites. (echo)

Help us when we feel scared or trapped. (echo)

You are amazing, God! (echo)

Amen. (echo)



Closing Prayer

Gather participants together.

Freeing God, thank you for your watchful eye on us. Help us to follow you and your ways to stay safe and free. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Remember to send “For the Home” take-home sheet with participants before dismissing them.



Rescue at the Red Sea

Reenact the story with actions and sounds.

Characters:

- Narrator
- Pharaoh
- Moses
- Miriam
- A pillar of cloud
- The Red Sea (at least two actors)
- Israelites
- Egyptian soldiers

Narrator: A long, long, long time ago, God's people the Israelites came to the land of Egypt for food because there was no food anywhere else. But in Egypt there was lots of food to eat, and the people were happy.

(Israelites walk to the main area and pretend to eat and be happy.)

Sound effects: Sounds of happy eating and partying.

Narrator: However, a new ruler, the Pharaoh, came to power and he was scared about how many Israelites there were.

(Pharaoh walks in, sees the Israelites, and acts scared.)

Sound effects: Murmur "oh my," "there are so many," and "that's very bad."

Narrator: So, Pharaoh decided to make the Israelites slaves. They were whipped and made to work hard doing whatever they were told to do. This made the Israelites sad and scared.

(Egyptian soldiers come in and pretend to boss the Israelites around. The Israelites pretend to work hard while looking sad and scared.)

Sound effects: Some make whipping and bullying sounds; others make fearful noises.

Rescue at the Red Sea

Reenact the story with actions and sounds.

Narrator: The Israelites prayed and prayed and prayed for God to rescue them.

(Israelites kneel and clasp their hands in prayer or use another prayer posture.)

Sound effects: Say “God, help us” or “God, rescue us.”

Narrator: God listened to their prayers and sent a man named Moses to them. God gave Moses a lot of instructions.

(Moses walks in, stops, and pretends to listen to someone speaking.)

Sound effects: Say “Moses” several times.

Narrator: God sent Moses to Pharaoh, demanding that the Pharaoh let the Israelites go free. The Pharaoh became very angry and refused. God sent nine bad plagues to convince the Pharaoh, but he still refused.

(Moses walks to Pharaoh. Both mime an argument.)

Sound effects: Some say, “let my people go” and others say “no!”

Narrator: God sent one last, very bad plague, and—finally—Pharaoh said the Israelites could leave. The Israelites gathered their things and prepared to travel.

(Moses and the Israelites are happy. The Pharaoh and the Egyptian soldiers are sad. The Israelites pretend to gather belongings and wait to leave.)

Sound effects: Some clap and sound happy, others weep.

Narrator: God sent a pillar of cloud to lead Moses and the Israelites to freedom.

(The pillar of cloud, wrapped in a white sheet, walks in front of the Israelites and Moses who pretend to march. The Pharaoh and Egyptian soldiers leave in the other direction.)

Sound effects: Stomping feet or clapping hands.

Rescue at the Red Sea

Reenact the story with actions and sounds.

Narrator: Oh no, Pharaoh changed his mind! He sent the Egyptian soldiers to recapture the Israelites.

(Pharaoh points to the Israelites. The Egyptian soldiers run in place, pretending to chase the Israelites.)

Sound effects: Stomping feet and various horse noises.

Narrator: God led the Israelites to the shores of the Red Sea. Oh no! They are trapped and very scared.

(Two or more actors hold blue sheets in front of the Israelites blocking their way. The Israelites look scared.)

Sound effects: Various cries of despair such as, “Oh no,” “What are we going to do!” and grumbling,

Narrator: God moved the pillar of cloud between the Israelites and the Egyptian soldiers. And then God told Moses to lift up his staff toward the Red Sea.

(The pillar of cloud moves between the Israelites and Egyptian soldiers. Moses lifts up a staff toward the Red Sea that is blocking their way.)

Sound effects: Oohs and aahs of disbelief.

Narrator: God sent a strong wind from the east all night that caused the waters of the Red Sea to part, forming walls of water on each side of a dry path.

(The actors holding the blue sheets or papers turn toward each other creating an open path forward.)

Sound effects: Wind noises.

Narrator: The Israelites walked on the path through the Red Sea, amazed at what was happening.

Rescue at the Red Sea

Reenact the story with actions and sounds.

(Moses and the Israelites pass through the space between sheets, the pillar of cloud following. If there is not enough space for the Israelites to walk between the sheets, the actors holding the sheets (or paper) can move the other direction on each side of the Israelites who are marching in place.)

Sound effects. Marching noises, wind, woo-hoo of amazement.

Narrator: The Egyptian soldiers tried to follow the Israelites through the Red Sea, but the water closed in over them and they drowned.

*(The Egyptian soldiers try to walk through the Red Sea, but the actors rotate again, blocking the way.
Optional: Egyptian soldiers are in the midst of the blue sheets when it closes.)*

Sound effects: Crashing and splashing water and cries of unhappiness from the Egyptian soldiers.

Narrator: The Israelites were now free, safe, and very happy. Moses' sister Miriam danced and sang praises to God for rescuing them.

(The Israelites celebrate while Miriam pretends to play an instrument and dance.)

Sound effects: Shouts of "Hallelujah" and celebration noises.

Narrator: God had rescued the Israelites from their slavery in Egypt. What happens next? Well, that is a different story.

The Red Sea

The Point

God gives freedom.

Key Verse

The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground.

– Exodus 14:22

Did You Know?

- The term used in the original Hebrew language in this story calls the body of water the Israelites cross through the “Sea of Reeds” not the Red Sea. The labeling of the sea as the Red Sea came about later. Scholars do not know precisely where this Reed Sea was.
- God’s ability to control the waters of the Red Sea remind us of the creation story where God ordered and separated the chaotic primordial waters in Genesis 1:6-7, 9-10.
- After their forty-year journey in the wilderness, the people of Israel entered the Promised Land by walking on dry land as the Jordan River was parted, reminiscent of this story of the Red Sea.
- The story of God delivering the people from slavery in Egypt, including the crossing of the sea, is celebrated in the Jewish festival of Passover. It is one of the defining stories of Israelite and Jewish identity.
- Unlike many artistic portrayals of this event, the dividing of the sea was not immediate. Instead, it took all night and was done by a strong east wind.
- The apostle Paul compares the crossing of the Red Sea to Christian baptism in 1 Corinthians 10:1-2.

Why It Matters

- When we feel trapped, God brings us to freedom.
- We are called to follow God’s example and work for justice and freedom for all people.
- We can celebrate God’s gift of freedom.

Prayer of the Week

God, empower us to see options and alternatives when we feel trapped. Amen.

Discussion Starters

What is one way you can feel trapped in your daily life? Draw a picture of that, and then cross it out with a big red “X”.

Close your eyes and envision a life with no fences, locks, or blockades—physically or emotionally. What does that look like?

Consider ways in which you may be contributing to someone else feeling trapped. If possible, without causing further harm, call them and apologize.

What is one simple life change that you can make to feel more free in your life? Write it down, and once you have made that change rip the paper up.

As a household choose a charitable group to research, such as a women’s shelter, and make a plan to volunteer, donate, or otherwise support them.



Blessing for the Week

Share this blessing while tracing a cross on each person’s forehead or hand with their permission: **God wants you to be free.**