

LESSON 4

CROSSING THE RED SEA

BEFORE YOU TEACH

The Red Sea

English Bibles call the sea that God parted for the Israelites the “Red Sea.” The Hebrew words are *yam suph*, which mean “Sea of Reeds.” Many believe that the Sea of Reeds was a deep ancient lake north of the western arm of the modern Red Sea.

Parting the waters surely was an extraordinary miracle. The Israelites passed through on dry land, with a wall of water on both sides (Ex 14:22). When the Egyptians followed, the waters flowed back over the army. Every soldier Pharaoh had sent to recapture his Israelites slaves drowned.

Some scholars believe the Israelites did not cross the main body of the Red Sea, but rather one of the shallow lakes or marshes north of it that dried up at certain times of the year, or perhaps a smaller branch of the Red Sea where the water would have been shallow enough to wade across. But the Bible clearly states that the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind that night making the sea into dry land and dividing the waters. Also, the water was deep enough to cover the chariots (Ex 14:28). The God who created the earth and water performed a mighty miracle at exactly the right time to demonstrate His great power and love for His people.

War Chariots

War chariots each carried two people—one to drive and one to fight. These horse-drawn chariots each had a wood or leather cab placed over two wheels. These were the armored tanks of biblical times. As 600 Egyptian war chariots bore down on the helpless Israelites, God opened a way for the Israelites and they crossed the Red Sea to safety. As for the mighty Egyptian army, they were swept away when God caused the waters to return to their place.

Trust in God

Trapped against the sea, the Israelites faced the Egyptian army sweeping in for the kill. After watching God’s powerful hand deliver them from Egypt, their responses were fear, whining, and despair. Where was their trust in God? Israel had to learn from repeat experiences that God was able to provide for them. God has preserved these examples in the Bible so that we can learn to trust Him. By focusing on God’s faithfulness in the past, we can face crises with confidence rather than with fear and complaining.

This is the first instance of grumbling and complaining by the Israelites. Their lack of faith in God is startling. Yet how often do we find ourselves doing the same thing, complaining over inconveniences or discomforts?

BIBLE TEXT

Exodus 13:17-14:31

BIBLE TRUTHS

1. God is a powerful God.
2. God is with us in difficult times.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To rely on God because God is all-powerful.
2. To pray unceasingly for God’s guidance and to have faith in God.
3. To give thanks to God at all times.

MEMORY VERSE

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

(Philippians 4:13)

PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Loving, heavenly Father, we thank You for letting us come together to learn about the crossing of the Red Sea. In today’s lesson, please help us realize how the Israelites overcame their difficulty by relying on You. Also, help us understand why it is important to remember what You have done for us. Please open our minds and hearts so we can store Your wonderful words. Hallelujah! Amen.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

Sometimes, one moment everything is just fine, and the next, everything is out of control. This was the case with the Israelites—everything was just fine when they were leaving Egypt, but soon the Egyptian soldiers were closing in on them and they were trapped at the Red Sea.

Your students may face problems like this that seem impossible to solve. In situations like these, they may wonder why something like this is happening to them. Doesn't God know what is happening? Why doesn't God do anything to stop it? When things get hard they begin to complain and forget something important about God. Nothing happens that is ever out of God's control. Perhaps

an earthquake or a hurricane struck and a whole city was destroyed. People they love may be injured in an accident or dying of a disease. Maybe their family is having a hard time because one or both parents have lost their jobs.

These difficult situations are hard to understand, but the Bible teaches us that God is sovereign. He is the ruler of all things, and He works things out according to His own plan. Nothing happens unless God, in His wisdom, allows it. Paul states in Ephesians, God "works all things according to the counsel of His will" (Eph 1:11b). We can't always understand why things happen, but we do know that God is in control.

VOCABULARY

miracle: an event or action done by God that is totally amazing, wonderful, and unexpected

escape: to break loose and run free

chariot: a fast cart with two wheels that is pulled by horses

desert: a hot and dry place

drown: to die underwater because there's no air to breathe

faith: believing that something is true; believing in or trusting someone to tell the truth

REVIEW

Last week, we learned about the Passover and how God saved the Israelites' firstborn children. What did the Israelites have to do and wear during Passover? (They had to sacrifice an unblemished year-old male lamb, roast it, and eat it quickly with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. As they ate, they were to be wearing a robe and a belt and holding a staff.) Who did the Passover lamb represent? (Jesus Christ.) The lamb represented Jesus and the sacrifice that He made to cleanse us of our sins.

Today, we celebrate the Holy Communion in remembrance of His death. Just as the Israelites ate roasted lamb that signified Jesus' body, we eat unleavened bread and drink grape juice, which represent His body and blood. By partaking of the Holy Communion, we become a part of Jesus, and remember the sacrifice He made for us.

BIBLE STORY

Pharaoh Chases After the Israelites

After the ten plagues, Pharaoh finally told the Israelites to leave his land once and for all. Moses did as God told him and first led the Israelites to camp near the Red Sea. God knew that Pharaoh would chase after them. Indeed, when Pharaoh heard that the people of Israel had finally left Egypt, he and his officials changed their minds and said, "Look what we have done! We have let them get away, and they will no longer be our slaves!"

Pharaoh got his war chariot and his army ready. He placed officers in charge of his 600 best chariots and all his other chariots and started chasing after the people of Israel. Even though the people of Israel were glad to be leaving, when

they saw the army with chariots and horsemen approaching, they panicked and cried to God for help. Students, how would you feel if you were an Israelite facing the sea, thinking that you might die at any moment? I don't know about you, but I would be very scared. Can you remember a time when you felt afraid and helpless? What was it like? How did you get through it?

The People Cry Out in Fear

Well, let's look at how the Israelites reacted when they were in deep trouble. Let's open our Bibles to Exodus 14:11-12. In the midst of fear and chaos, many Israelites

turned to Moses and complained, “Were there not enough places in Egypt to bury us? Is that why you brought us out here in the desert to die? Why did you bring us out of Egypt anyway? While we were there, didn’t we tell you to leave us alone? It would be better to be slaves in Egypt than to die in this desert!”

Students, do you think Moses would get mad at the Israelites for having no faith in God? How many of you think that Moses would be mad; raise your hand if you do. How many of you don’t think so? [Tally up students’ responses on the board and continue to tell the story.] This is what Moses said to the people in verses 13 and 14, “Don’t be afraid! Be brave, and you will see how the Lord will save you today. These Egyptians will never bother you again. The Lord will fight for you, and you won’t have to worry.”

Then the Lord said to Moses, “Why do you keep calling out to Me for help? Tell the people of Israel to move forward. When you hold your staff over the sea, the water will open up and make a road where they can walk through on dry ground. I will make the Egyptians so stubborn that they will go after you. I will be praised because of what will happen to Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen. The Egyptians will know for sure that I am the Lord.”

Do you remember how God was leading the Israelites? (By the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night). At that time, God moved the pillar of cloud from in front of the Israelites to behind, so that it was between the Egyptian army and the Israelites, making it dark for one side and light for the other. Neither side was able to get near the other all night.

[Read Exodus 14:21-22.] Wow! Can you picture what God did? The wind blew so hard on the sea that the waters were divided. There was a wall of water on each side as the Israelites hurried through on dry ground. When Pharaoh’s army chased after them, God caused the wheels on the chariots to fall off and they couldn’t drive them! So the Egyptians said to one another, “Let’s leave these people alone! The Lord is fighting for them against us.” Then God told Moses, “Hold your hand out over the sea, so the water will cover the Egyptians and their chariots and horsemen.” Moses held out his hand, and at daybreak the water went back into place. The Egyptians tried to run away when the water came toward them, but God drowned them in the sea. The water came and covered the chariots, the horsemen, and the entire Egyptian army that had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not one of them was left alive. But the Israelites had walked through on dry land safely. With this miraculous parting of the Red Sea, God provided an escape for the Israelites from Pharaoh’s army.

We need to remember that our God is almighty and He always watches over us no matter what situation we are in. However, the most important thing for us to do is to rely on God with our heart and through our actions. Boys

and girls, how exactly can we rely on God in our daily lives? [Reinforce to students the concept of relying on God, e.g., you can kneel down and pray, ask your friend or family members to pray with you or for you, call out “hallelujah” when you see danger while driving, etc. Encourage students to think of as many ways as they can of relying on God.]

The Israelites Put Their Faith in God

On that day, when the people of Israel saw the bodies of the Egyptians washed up on the shore, they knew that God had saved them from the Egyptians. Because of the mighty power that God used against the Egyptians, the people of Israel saw the bodies of the Egyptians washed up on the shore, they knew that God had saved them from the Egyptians. Because of the mighty power that God used against the Egyptians, the people of Israel worshiped Him and put their faith in Him and in His servant Moses. Sometimes we may face great danger. It is hard to stand still and not panic, but God wants us to trust and depend on Him.

A Short Testimony

Let me tell a short testimony about how God protected a child who was about your age. This happened not long ago on a hot summer day. It was Lilly’s summer break! Lilly was so excited to go to the beach with her family: Mom, Dad, and her six-year-old brother Jordan. Her mom and dad had been promising to take her and Jordan to the beach for her eighth birthday celebration. So, on a hot sunny Sunday, they packed all their beach gear along with yummy picnic food and headed down to the beach. When they arrived at their destination, they were very surprised to see many people out on the beach already, enjoying the sunshine and playing in the water. Lilly and Jordan couldn’t wait to join the crowd. As soon as their parents had set up their beach umbrella and spread out their beach mat, they headed off towards the water. As they ran off, their mom reminded them to be careful, to stay close to each other, and not to go into the water without Mom or Dad around. Lilly and Jordan nodded their heads and waved goodbye. At first, Lilly and Jordan were playing in the sand, each building a magical castle of their own. Then they played tag, chasing each other around on the soft, glittering sand. In no time, they had already wandered out of their parents’ sight. Even though he knew they could not go into the water by themselves, Jordan suggested, “Let’s go for a swim!” Lilly turned around trying to look for her parents, but couldn’t see them.

She comforted herself by thinking, “Surely it would be okay to just dip our toes into the water for a minute! In fact, I’m a big girl now. I can take care of Jordan in the water by myself.”

“Okay, let’s go in the water, Jordan,” said Lilly. “But you have to hold my hands and stay with me, okay?” Lilly

tried to sound like a big sister.

The water was icy cold. "It's freezing!" Lilly laughed, as she splashed some water on Jordan.

Jordan splashed at her, too. They played and were having a good time. However, they didn't notice that they were walking deeper and deeper into the water. All of a sudden a big wave caught them both by surprise, knocking them over and into the rushing water. Lilly tried to breathe, but instead of air, she sucked in a big mouthful of water. She felt so scared. Would she die? At that urgent moment, Lilly remembered God and called out "Hallelujah!" in her heart. In just a split second, another big wave pushed her out of the water and onto the wet sand. Lilly coughed and coughed. She looked around to find Jordan. There was Jordan trying to look for her, too. Lilly started crying and felt so bad for not listening to her parents.

"Are you okay, Jordan? I'm so sorry for not taking care of you," Lilly cried.

"Don't worry, Lilly. I'm a good swimmer, too. I was just looking for you in the water," said Jordan.

"That big wave pulled me into the water. I choked and

couldn't breathe. I was so scared! I really thought that I was going to die, but God saved me. He picked me up from the water," said Lilly thankfully.

"Let's go find Mom and Dad and tell them what just happened," said Jordan.

They soon realized that their parents were looking all over for them. Lilly and Jordan apologized to their mom and dad for not staying in sight. Lilly also told them about what happened to her underwater. The family offered a sincere prayer to God for His protection and guidance. Lilly and Jordan learned that we never have to be afraid when facing danger, because God is always watching over us. We just need to remember to rely on God.

Have you ever been in situations like Lilly and Jordan's? How did you rely on God? [After students share their experiences, remind students to count God's blessings and continue to trust in God.] Boys and girls, God is always with us to protect us. He can provide a way to overcome all difficulties and give us strength even if our problems seem hopeless. We don't need to be afraid because God gives us victory in life if we just trust in Him.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

- 1. How did God lead the Israelites out of Egypt?** God inflicted ten plagues upon the Egyptians so that stubborn Pharaoh would agree to let the Israelites leave his country.
- 2. How did the Israelites react when they knew that they were being chased by Pharaoh's army and thought that they were going to die?** They panicked and cried out to God for help, but at the same time, they complained to Moses for taking them out of Egypt.
- 3. What was the great miracle that God performed when the Israelites were being chased by Pharaoh's army?** He divided the waters of the Red Sea for the Israelites so they could walk through on the dry land safely.
- 4. What happened to Pharaoh's army and chariots?** They all drowned in the water.
- 5. How do you think the Israelites felt after they crossed the Red Sea and all the Egyptian soldiers drowned?** They were joyful and comforted.
- 6. Are there times when you feel as scared as the Israelites did? What can you do at these times?** Pray to God.

MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.

You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13)

SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

We see here that the children of Israel have found themselves in a desperate situation. They are trapped with nowhere to turn. There seems to be no way out. They're caught between the Pharaoh and the deep Red Sea. There are times in our lives when we, like the children of Israel, face a Red Sea crossing. There are several things we need to do that will enable us to cross the Red Seas of our lives.

1. Don't be afraid, look at God, and have faith in God! (Ex 14:13-14)

Don't be afraid. Don't allow the enemy to keep you in fear. Being afraid or having fear is the OPPOSITE of having faith

2 Ti 1:7, "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

The problem was that Israel didn't believe that God would bring them out. They didn't believe that God would see them through! All of us are going to experience a time when we have to be rescued. Moses looked at the people who had FEAR written all over their faces and realized this "fear thing" had to be dealt with FIRST! Therefore, he said, "Fear not."

You have a choice as to whether you allow fear to dominate you or not. "Let not your hearts be troubled."

The people of God had come to a place where they had to make a choice. The same thing goes for us; do we give up? Or do we look at God and have faith that God will guide us through? We have to be able to stand by faith before we can walk by faith.

When we depend on the Lord, He'll strengthen our hearts. He'll strengthen our mind through the word of God and the power of prayer. God will never leave nor forsake us.

2. God is all-powerful!

We say, "It's impossible." God says, "All things are possible." (Mt 19:26)

We say, "I am too tired." God says, "I will give you rest." (Mt 11:28)

We say, "Nobody really loves me." God says, "I love you." (Jn 3:16)

We say, "Nobody really cares for me." God says, "I care for you." (1 Pet 5:7)

We say, "I cannot go on." God says, "My grace is sufficient." (2 Cor 12:9)

We say, "I cannot figure things out." God says, "I shall direct your paths." (Prov 3:6)

We say, "I cannot do it." God says, "You can do all things through Christ who strengthens you." (Phil 4:13)

We say, "I am unable." God says, "I am able." (2 Cor 9:8)

We say, "I don't know how to meet my needs." God says, "I will supply all your needs." (Phil 4:19)

3. Pray to God

God is always with us, no matter what we are facing. Even during the most difficult times, He is with us. He may not take all of our problems or sufferings away immediately, but He promises to be with us all the time, to comfort us and strengthen us.

1. Pray to God daily and ask Him to strengthen our faith. When can we pray to God each day?
2. Ask your mom or dad to tell you a testimony about how they trusted in God in difficult times. Write a summary of the testimony and share it with a friend. (This can be a homework assignment.)
3. What is your biggest challenge at home? What is your biggest challenge at school? What can you say when you pray to God about these challenges? Remember that God has His way and His time.

4. Cry out to God for His guidance

The Israelites cried out to Moses when they were in trouble. Moses cried out to God for them. Moses knew that he had to turn to God, especially when they faced immediate danger.

Today, we can call out "Hallelujah!" or say a silent prayer whenever we are in danger or having difficulties. We have heard many testimonies of brothers and sisters who cried out to God at perilous times and were saved or protected. The word "hallelujah" holds great power. Help the students understand this power and develop a healthy habit of relying on God.

* * * * *

Activity: Who Do You Call?

When you meet a challenge, to whom do you turn?

Ask students to write the numbers 1-5 on a piece of paper. Then instruct them to write who they would turn to first when they face each problem as you read the problem aloud [remember to say, "Who do you call?" at the end of each question for emphasis and fun]. Tell them to write down the person's name only.

1. There's a fire at your house. Who do you call?
2. You are in a car accident. Who do you call?
3. You got lost at a store while shopping with your parents. Who do you call?
4. You're being bullied by someone at school. Who do you call?
5. Your relative just found out he has cancer. Who do you call?

After the students have written down their answers, ask them to raise their hands if they wrote “God” for any of them. Ask them how many of them wrote “God” twice, three times, four times, etc. Explain how it’s important to turn to God in all of these situations even though we also need to turn to our parents, teachers, or other adults when we have these problems.

Ask the students to look at their answers as you read through the problems again. Explain that God cares about everything that goes on in our lives, big or small, and that He is able to help us with every problem. That’s why we call on God for anything and everything! Call on different students to share how they can rely on God for each of these problems.

ACTIVITIES

1

“Crossing the Red Sea” Skit

Objective: To remind students to always have trust, courage and faith in God.

Instructions: Bring two people puppets or have two students read. You can also dress them like the Israelites.

Two Israelite children, Mary and Joshua, are riding on a camel.

Mary: Why do you think our parents are rushing around in a big hurry? Something big must be going on!

Joshua: I-I-I wonder where we’re going? Dad said God will watch over His people!

Mary: It looks like all God’s people are leaving Egypt and I am sure Mom didn’t pack much for this trip. I am getting scared!

Joshua: Don’t worry, remember that Mom and Dad always tell us our shield is God Most High! Did you see that pillar of fire? Wow, this is amazing!

Mary: Are you sure God’s showing us the way to go? Look behind us Joshua! See, Pharaoh’s army is chasing us and God’s people can’t go forward any more because of the Red Sea.

Joshua: Let’s follow the people and go to the right.

Mary: We can’t, there are mountain ranges!

Joshua: Let’s follow our parents and go to the left.

Mary: Open your eyes, Joshua! There are mountain ranges there, too!

Joshua: Aghhhh, we’re trapped!

Mary: Look! God’s putting a big thick pillar of cloud between His people and the Egyptian army. The army has stopped, at least for the time being.

Joshua: Hey, look, what’s Moses doing?

Mary: Why, Moses is holding his staff and has stretched out his arm over the Red Sea, and look, Joshua, God is parting the water! We’re on the move again! I knew God would protect His people.

Joshua: Mary, look, the ground is dry. We’re crossing on dry ground! Those walls of water look scary. I’m worried!

Mary: Now, Joshua, just follow our parents and go through the Red Sea. Remember what they always teach us? “But know that the Lord has set apart for Himself him who is godly; The Lord will hear when I call to Him” (Psalm 4:3).

Joshua: Yes, you’re right! God’s word is the best!

[Both of them repeat Psalm 4:3 two times.]

Joshua: We’ve been traveling a while now, but look! We’ve finally made it across. Don’t look now, but the Egyptian army is coming after us again! Look, the army is crossing the Red Sea and boy, their chariots are fast!

Mary: Can’t Dad’s camel go any faster?

Joshua: The army is starting to gain on us, they’re about halfway across the Red Sea! *[Look surprised and jump up and down.]* Look, Mary! Moses stretched out his arm and staff over the Red Sea again! The Lord has caused the walls of water to collapse and the Egyptian army has been drowned! We’re safe, we’re safe! Praise God!

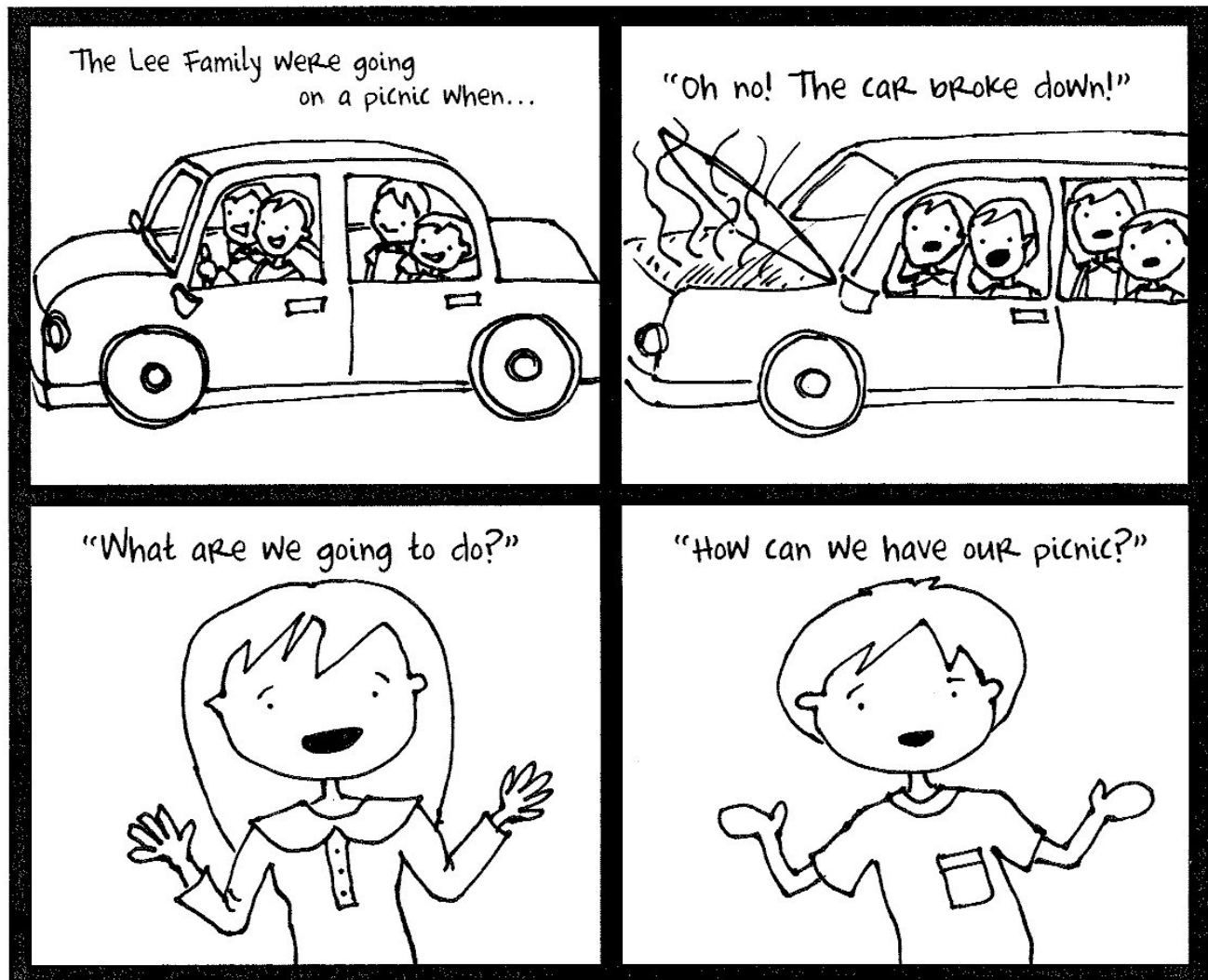
Mary: Thanks be to God!...Look, Joshua, all of God’s people are praising Him and shouting glory to God!

Joshua: Let’s get off this camel, hug Mom and Dad, and praise God!

[Recite the following verse together.] “I can do all things through Christ who strengthen me” (Phil 4:13).

2

God Help Us!



Draw or write an ending to this story. How would God help?

3**"Crossing the Red Sea" Snack / Optional activity****Objective:** To teach the Bible story in an interactive way.**Materials**

- Red Jell-O (Red Sea)
- Gummy bears (Moses, Israelites, and Pharaoh's army)
- Small paper plates
- Plastic knife
- Rectangle tin/container
- Spoons

Preparations

1. Before class, make red Jell-O and place it in a rectangular container.
2. Each student should receive a cube of Jell-O on a paper plate.
3. The teacher should give each student three gummy bears to represent Moses, the Israelites, and Pharaoh's army.

Instructions

1. Have students retell the story using the gummy bears as their puppets.
2. When it comes to the part of God parting the Red Sea, have students each get a spoon and eat a passageway through the middle of their "Jell-O Red Sea" so that it "parts."
3. Have students place their gummy bears in the parted Red Sea and continue to reenact the story.
4. At the end, they can eat the gummy bears and the rest of their Jell-O to celebrate God's great deliverance.

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. He lost the services of the Israelite people who were used like slaves, and his heart was hardened.
2. They complained, blamed Moses, and said they would rather go back and serve the Egyptians than die in the desert.
3. God.
4. They needed to listen to Moses.
5. He placed a pillar of cloud between the two of them.
6. The waters returned and Pharaoh's entire army drowned.
7. Instead of being afraid, they trusted God.
8. He performed a miracle to stop an enemy from doing harm.
9. Answers may vary.
10. Answers may vary; "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13)

E1 Year 1 Book 3 Lesson 4—Crossing the Red Sea

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Bible Truths: 1. God is a powerful God.
2. God is with us in difficult times.

Lesson Objectives: 1. To rely on God because God is all-powerful.
2. To pray unceasingly for God's guidance and to have faith in God.
3. To give thanks to God at all times.

Bible Reading: Please put a checkmark in the space when you complete the reading each day.

Prayer: Please put a checkmark in the space on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Philippians 4:13)

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Homework Assignment

Understanding What You Have Learned

1. Pharaoh let the Israelite people go, but he changed his mind. Why?

2. What did the Israelites do when they saw the Egyptians?

3. Who did Moses say would fight for the Israelites? _____

4. What would the Israelites need to do? _____

5. How did God keep the Egyptians away from the Israelites before they crossed the Red Sea?

6. What happened when Moses stretched out his hand over the sea the second time?

7. How did the attitude of the Israelite people change at the end of this story?

8. How do we see God's protection in this story? _____

Life Application

9. What is your biggest challenge at home or at school? Write what you would say to God in your prayer to ask for His help.

Write down how you have relied on God or how God has helped you face a challenge this week. (You can pick any day.)

10. Ask your mom or dad (or another relative) to tell you a testimony (a true story) about how he or she has relied on God in difficult times. Write down one important part of the testimony. For older students, please write down the entire testimony on a separate piece of paper.

Read the memory verse (Philippians 4:13), memorize it, and write it down.
