



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.

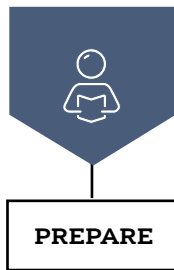
God delivered His people. The Israelites saw God’s power and did what Pharaoh and the Egyptians refused to do: They feared the Lord. Exodus 15 records their song to God, reflecting on His power and faithful love for His people.

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.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- “Feeling and Trusting” activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- milk
- shallow dish or plate
- dish soap
- cotton swab
- red food color

Session Starter (Option 2)

- masking tape or painter’s tape
- plastic cup
- golf ball
- golf putter or yardstick
- boxes, cones, or other obstacles



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- “God Parted the Red Sea” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- “Unit 4, Session 3” questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- “The McDonalds Update” missions video
- world map

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- “Unchanging God (Numbers 23:19)” song
- worship song of your choice (optional)



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set
- world map



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- Printable: “McDonald Children Q&A”

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- blue balloons, 25
- masking tape
- Big Picture Question Poster

Journal and Prayer

- Journal Page
- “Clue Connections” activity page



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?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Feeling and Trusting” on the activity page.

SAY “Sometimes we find ourselves in scary or uncomfortable situations. Even then, we can trust God to take care of us. In today’s Bible story, we will see how God took care of the Israelites when they were very afraid.”

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.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

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.** ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (2 minutes)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ Remember that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell the one big story of God’s plan to rescue sinners. In the Old Testament, we see God’s working out His plan through His chosen people, the Israelites. But for hundreds of years, the Israelites were slaves in Egypt. Egypt was not the land God had promised His people; He promised to give them the land of Canaan.

Last time, we saw how God sent plagues as judgment on Egypt, and Pharaoh finally allowed the Israelites to leave. When the Israelites encountered an obstacle on the way to Canaan, God showed His faithfulness again. Today’s story is called ‘God Parted the Red Sea.’ Let’s see what happened. ”



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.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

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.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 4, Session 3” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Can I ask God for help when I’m in trouble? Will He help me get out of it?
2. How can we help one another trust God, who delivers us from sin and death?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

SAY “ Today we learned that God led His people right through the Red Sea, out of Egypt and toward a land of their own. Have any of you ever been to another country? The McDonald family is currently living in Kenya before they move to Tanzania. They had never lived outside of the United States before. What do you think it would be like to pack up or sell everything you own and move to a foreign country? Name one thing that you would definitely bring with you. ”

Ask a volunteer to point to Kenya and Tanzania on a world map. Then play the missions video. Close in prayer, for the McDonalds’ children. Pray that they will adjust to and love their new life in Tanzania. Pray also for missionaries your church supports.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Numbers 23:19 together.

SAY “ The Israelites were afraid that God might not keep His promise to save them when the Egyptians appeared. In fact, they worried God had brought them there to die. God did save them, though, just like our key passage reminds us. ”

Guide kids to form a circle. Encourage each kid to come up with a hand motion for the next word of the verse. As you add more hand motions, repeat what you have already done and add on the new word. Continue until all the words have motions. Finish by saying the whole verse from start to finish.

Lead kids to sing “Unchanging God (Numbers 23:19).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

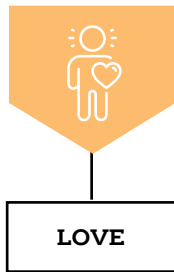
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning from **LEARN** to **LOVE**.

SAY “ God, You are trustworthy, powerful, and faithful. Thank You for fighting for us and providing for us. Help us trust You and to tell others about You. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Exodus 15. Explain that the shortest way from Egypt (H7) to Canaan (G9) followed the Mediterranean Sea. God planned to show His power by leading them to the Red Sea (I9).

Consider comparing the Old Testament Mediterranean Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where these stories took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around modern-day Egypt and northwest Saudi Arabia.) Choose a volunteer to read aloud Exodus 15:1-3.

| SAY “ The Israelites couldn’t have escaped the Egyptians without God’s help. They had nowhere else to go. When God divided the sea for the Israelites to cross, He showed His power over nature. Pharaoh’s best warriors were helpless when God held them back. The Israelites recognized God’s power and worshiped Him. ”

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.)

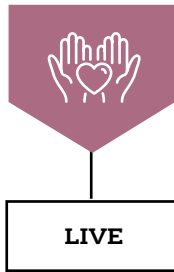
| SAY “ How does the story of the Red Sea crossing remind us of Jesus? ”

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.)

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: KIDS Q&A



Before the session, write A on one piece of paper and B on another. Tape the papers to opposite walls in your room.

SAY “As God’s people traveled into the wilderness through the Red Sea, they didn’t know what to expect in their new lives. Do you think you would know what to expect if you moved to Tanzania with the McDonald family? We’re going to learn from the McDonald children what it’s like to live in Tanzania.”

Read each question from the printable and encourage kids to move to the side of the room that represents the answer they think the McDonald kids gave. Then reveal the actual answer.

SAY “Did any of these answers surprise you? Does it sound like their life in Africa is what you imagined it would be like?”

Remind the kids to pray for the McDonalds this week, as well as any missionaries your church supports.

OPTION 2: RED SEA RACE



Before class, inflate 25 blue balloons. Form two groups. Place the balloons in the middle of the room. Direct each group to stand at opposite sides of the room. Give each group a roll of masking tape. Explain that kids will race one at a time to pick up a balloon and return to their group’s side of the room.

Kids should use the tape to secure the balloons to the wall. When the balloon is attached, another player may retrieve a balloon. Continue play until kids secure all the balloons to the walls.

SAY “In today’s Bible story, God proved to the Egyptians that He is the one true God. God created a way to save the Israelites by parting the Red Sea. In a similar way, God created the way for people to escape the penalty of sin through His Son, Jesus. We didn’t deserve salvation, but God love us and promised to send a Savior. **Does God keep His promises? Yes, God always keeps His promises because He is faithful.**”

2 JOURNAL AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God’s glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Review the gospel and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray, thanking God for His power and protection. Ask God to help kids trust His provision even when they are scared. As time allows, lead kids to complete “Clue Connections” on the activity page.