

WEEK 17: THE RED SEA: GOD MAKES A WAY

Main Lesson | Ages 5–11 | Read-Aloud | Scripture-Centered | Christ-Centered

April 26, 2026 | Exodus 14

LESSON OVERVIEW

Week #:	17
Date:	April 26, 2026
Lesson Title:	The Red Sea: God Makes a Way
Primary Scripture:	Exodus 14
Bible Timeline:	After the Passover and Israel's escape from Egypt; before the wilderness journey and before God gives His Law at Mount Sinai.

BIG IDEA

When God's people cannot save themselves, God makes a way.

MEMORY VERSE

"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

God was teaching His people that their rescue would come from Him, not from their own strength. They still needed to trust Him and obey Him, but the victory belonged to the Lord.

SETTING THE SCENE

Opening Reminder — Read Aloud to Children:

Children, before we begin, let's remember what the Bible is. The Bible is God's true Word. It has 66 books. God used about 40 different human writers. He gave His Word across many years, on 3 continents, and in 3 languages. God used many kinds of people, but the Bible has one perfect Author behind it: God the Holy Spirit. That is why all Scripture is true, trustworthy, and important.

The Bible is one big true account, and every part points us to Jesus.

Read Aloud — 2 Timothy 3:16:

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness."

That means the Bible is not just a collection of human ideas. God guided the writers so that His Word is exactly what He wanted written. So when we open the Bible, we are hearing truth from God.

Last week, we heard about the Passover. God rescued His people from judgment through the blood of the lamb, and then He brought them out of Egypt. Now God's people are on the move, but they are not safe because they are strong. They are safe because God is with them.

Read Aloud — Exodus 13:21–22:

"By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people."

God was not far away. He was leading His people. He knew exactly where they were going. But then something frightening happened. Pharaoh changed his mind and came after them. Today we will hear how God made a way when His people had no way to save themselves.

MAIN LESSON NARRATIVE | READ ALOUD – AT LEAST 10 MINUTES

Children, imagine standing with the people of Israel after leaving Egypt. For many years they had been slaves. They had worked hard under cruel masters. They had cried out to God, and God had heard them. He sent Moses. He sent plagues on Egypt. He protected His people through the Passover. Then, at last, Pharaoh let them go.

Now the people were traveling together, men, women, children, older people, and animals too. This was not a little group of soldiers marching out in neat rows. This was a great crowd of families. Children were there. Parents were there. Grandparents were there. Everyone was moving together, and the Lord Himself was leading them.

By day there was a pillar of cloud. By night there was a pillar of fire. Can you picture it? When they looked ahead, they could see that God had not left them. He was guiding them step by step.

But then the Lord told Moses to have the people camp in a place that looked dangerous. It looked like they were hemmed in. There was water ahead of them, and there did not seem to be a way out. God already knew what Pharaoh would think. In Exodus 14:3–4, the Lord said Pharaoh would think, 'They are wandering around the land in confusion, hemmed in by the desert.' But God had a plan. He said, 'I will gain glory for myself through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord.'

So the Israelites camped where God told them to camp.

Then the terrible news came. Pharaoh had changed his mind. He was not content to let the people go. He gathered his chariots and his army and chased after Israel. Exodus 14 tells us that Pharaoh took hundreds of chariots. In those days, chariots were powerful war machines. They were fast. They were loud. They were frightening. If you were standing there with the people of Israel and you heard the rumble of wheels and saw the dust rising and the soldiers coming, your heart would pound.

That is exactly what happened. Exodus 14:10 says, 'As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the Lord.'

The people were afraid. Very afraid.

Then they said something sad and foolish. They began complaining to Moses. They said it would have been better to stay in Egypt and serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert. Fear was making them forget what God had already done. They had seen His power in Egypt. They had seen His mercy at Passover. They had seen His guiding cloud and fire. But now, when danger came close, fear shouted louder than faith.

That happens to people, doesn't it? Sometimes we forget God's faithfulness when trouble is right in front of us.

Read Aloud — Exodus 14:13–14:

"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."

Those are strong words. Moses did not say, 'You are strong enough.' He did not say, 'Try harder.' He did not say, 'Save yourselves.' He said, 'The Lord will fight for you.' Their hope was not in themselves. Their hope was in God.

Then the Lord spoke to Moses again. He told Moses to tell the people to move on. He told Moses to raise his staff and stretch out his hand over the sea so that the waters would divide and the Israelites could go through the sea on dry ground.

At the same time, God protected His people. The pillar of cloud that had been in front of Israel moved behind them. Think about that. God did not only lead them. He also stood between His people and their enemy. Exodus 14:19–20 says that the cloud brought darkness to one side and light to the other side. The Egyptians could not simply rush in and destroy the Israelites. God Himself was guarding His people.

Then came one of the great moments in all the Bible.

Read Aloud — Exodus 14:21:

"Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided."

The Lord did it. The sea did not part because Moses had magic power. Moses obeyed, but God worked the miracle. The waters divided. The path became dry. The God who made the sea ruled over the sea.

Can you picture the people looking at that path? A moment before, there had been no way through. Now there was a way where there had been no way.

Read Aloud — Exodus 14:22:

"And the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left."

This was not a muddy accident. This was not a lucky break. God made a dry path through the sea.

Now imagine the families stepping forward. Fathers, mothers, children, grandparents, all moving between towering walls of water. Maybe some children were holding a parent's hand tightly. Maybe some adults were still shaking with fear. But step by step, they went forward because God had spoken.

Sometimes trusting God looks like taking the next step He tells you to take, even while your heart is still pounding.

The Egyptians saw the path too, and they followed. Pharaoh and his army went in after Israel. But the God who opened the way for His people was also the God who would judge His enemies. Exodus 14:24–25 says that the Lord looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud and threw the Egyptian army into confusion. Their chariot wheels had trouble. The Egyptians began to realize something very important: the Lord was fighting against them.

That was exactly what Moses had said. 'The Lord will fight for you.'

Read Aloud — Exodus 14:27–28:

"The water flowed back and covered the chariots and horsemen, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not one of them survived."

But Exodus 14:29 says, 'the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left.' The same sea that became a path for God's people became judgment for their enemies. God saved His people completely.

When the Israelites saw what God had done, they understood something more deeply than before. Exodus 14:31 says, '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.'

They saw His mighty hand. They saw that He keeps His Word. They saw that He really is the living God.

And then, in Exodus 15, Moses and the people sang. They praised the Lord because He had triumphed gloriously. He had rescued them. He had defeated the enemy. He had made a way.

Children, this account teaches us something beautiful and important. God's people could not save themselves. They were trapped. They were weak. They were frightened. But God was not trapped. God was not weak. God was not frightened. He made a way where there was no way.

That is one reason this account matters so much. It shows us the kind of God He is. He is not only powerful. He is also faithful. He had promised to bring His people out of Egypt, and He did. He had promised to fight for them, and He did. He had promised that Egypt would know He is the Lord, and it happened exactly as He said.

And this account also points us to Jesus.

Long after the Red Sea, people still had an even bigger problem than Pharaoh. The biggest enemy of all is sin. Sin separates us from God. We cannot rescue ourselves from it. We cannot simply try harder and save ourselves. We need God to rescue us.

That is why Jesus came.

Just as God saved Israel through the blood of the Passover lamb and then brought them through the sea, Jesus gave His life for sinners as the true and better Lamb of God. He died on the cross for our sins, and He rose again. Through Jesus, God makes a way for us to be forgiven and brought safely to Himself.

The Red Sea teaches us, 'God makes a way.' The cross and the empty tomb show us the greatest way of all. Jesus is our Savior.

So when you feel afraid, when life feels too big, when you do not know what to do, remember this lesson. The answer is not, 'I am strong enough.' The answer is, 'God is faithful. God is powerful. God makes a way. I can trust Him.'

WHY WE CAN TRUST THIS ACCOUNT

We trust this account because it is God's Word, and God's Word is true. Exodus 14 tells this rescue as a real event in history, with real people, real places, real danger, and a real deliverance.

The rest of the Bible also keeps pointing back to this event as something that truly happened. Psalm 106:9 says, 'He rebuked the Red Sea, and it dried up.' Hebrews 11:29 says, 'By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land.' The Bible

speaks with one voice.

Some people ask, 'Could God really do that?' The answer is yes. If God created the sea, then He can rule the sea. Exodus 14:21 says God used a strong east wind through the night, but that does not make the miracle ordinary. God controlled the timing, made a dry path, protected His people, and defeated the army chasing them. This was the Lord's work.

We do not know the exact crossing place with certainty, but that does not weaken the truth of the event. The Bible's message is clear: God divided the waters, His people crossed safely, and their enemies were overthrown.

WHAT THIS SHOWS US ABOUT JESUS

We cannot save ourselves.	Israel could not save itself, and we cannot save ourselves. We need a Savior.
Blood before the sea.	The crossing comes after the Passover. God first saved His people through the blood of the lamb, then brought them out. Jesus is the true and greater Lamb who saves through His death and resurrection.
A way where there is none.	God made a way where there was no way. Jesus is the way to the Father. Through His cross and resurrection, He brings sinners out of slavery to sin and into new life.
Victory over every enemy.	Just as God defeated Pharaoh, Jesus will finally defeat every enemy. He is not only our Savior. He is also our Coming King.

GOD REVEALED AS TRINITY

The Bible teaches that God is one God in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Exodus 14 clearly shows the one true God saving His people. The passage does not give a full explanation of the Trinity, but it does show that God is active, present, powerful, and faithful.

God the Father	Plans salvation and directs history for His glory and His people's good.
God the Son	Jesus accomplishes salvation through His death and resurrection, the greater exodus from sin.
God the Holy Spirit	Brings God's presence to His people and helps them trust and obey Him.

The God who rescued Israel at the sea is the same God we know through all of Scripture as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is one God in three Persons.

LIFE APPLICATION

This week, children can remember three simple truths:

When I am afraid, I can cry out to God.

When I do not know what to do, I can trust God's Word.

When I feel weak, I can remember that God is strong.

Children should not leave this lesson thinking, 'I have to be fearless.' They should leave thinking, 'Even when I am afraid, I can trust the Lord.'

Encourage children to pray simple prayers such as:

"Lord, I am afraid, but You are with me."

"Lord Jesus, help me trust You today."

"Thank You for making a way for us through Jesus."

DEFENDING THE TRUTH

Did this really happen, or is it just a made-up Bible story?

Yes, this really happened. Exodus 14 tells it as a true event, and later parts of the Bible speak about it as true history too. Psalm 106:9 says God dried up the Red Sea, and Hebrews 11:29 says the people passed through it by faith. We believe this because God tells us the truth in His Word.

Supporting Scripture: Exodus 14:21–22 | Psalm 106:9 | Hebrews 11:29

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Core Questions for All Ages:

1. Why were the Israelites afraid?

Pharaoh and his army were chasing them, and the sea was in front of them.

2. What did Moses tell the people?

He told them not to be afraid, to stand firm, and that the Lord would fight for them.

3. Who parted the sea?

The Lord parted the sea.

4. How did God protect His people before they crossed?

He moved the pillar of cloud behind them and stood between them and the Egyptians.

5. What does this lesson teach us about God?

God is powerful, faithful, present, and able to save.

6. How does this lesson point to Jesus?

God made a way for Israel when they could not save themselves, and Jesus makes the way for sinners to be forgiven and brought to God.

Optional Deeper Questions:

1. Why do you think God led His people to a place that looked impossible?

So they would learn to trust Him and so His power would be clearly seen.

2. Is faith the same as never feeling afraid?

No. Faith means trusting God even when you are afraid.

3. Why is it important that God, not Moses, is the hero of this account?

Because only God can save. Moses obeyed, but the Lord did the miracle.

4. What are some times in life when you might need to remember that God makes a way?

When you are scared, confused, lonely, tempted, or facing something that feels too big.

HANDS-ON ACTIVITY | WALK THROUGH THE SEA

To help children remember that God made a way for His people and that Jesus is the way God has given for our salvation. This is a simple movement and object lesson.

Supplies Needed:

- Two blue blankets, sheets, or large pieces of paper
- A strip of open floor between them to serve as the path
- Optional paper cutout footprints

Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. Place the two blue pieces on the floor with a walking path in the middle.
2. Tell the children the blue sides represent the waters and the path in the middle represents the dry ground God provided.
3. Have the children walk through the path one at a time or in pairs while you read Exodus 14:22 aloud.
4. As each child walks through, say: 'God made a way.'
5. When everyone has had a turn, gather them and ask, 'Who made the way?' Let them answer, 'God made the way.'
6. Connect it to Jesus by saying: 'Just as God made a way through the sea, God made the way for sinners to come to Him through Jesus.'

Scripture Connection:

Exodus 14:22 | John 14:6

TEACHER CLOSING**Read aloud Exodus 14:13–14 one more time. Then say:**

Children, today we heard that when God's people had no way to save themselves, God made a way. The Lord fought for them. The Lord protected them. The Lord brought them safely through.

And this account points us to something even greater. Jesus came to save sinners who could not save themselves. He died on the cross for our sins and rose again. If you trust in Him, He will never leave you.

When you feel afraid this week, remember: God is with His people. God keeps His Word. God makes a way.

Close in Prayer:

Lord, thank You for showing us Your power at the Red Sea. Thank You for making a way for Your people when they could not save themselves. Thank You most of all for Jesus, who died for our sins and rose again. Help us trust You when we are afraid. Help us remember that You are faithful and strong. In Jesus' name, amen.