

# WEEK 17: THE RED SEA: GOD MAKES A WAY

TEACHER BACKGROUND & PREPARATION SHEET | FOR TEACHER STUDY ONLY – NOT READ ALOUD

April 26, 2026 | Exodus 14

## LESSON IDENTIFICATION

<b>Week #:</b>	17
<b>Date:</b>	April 26, 2026
<b>Lesson Title:</b>	The Red Sea: God Makes a Way
<b>Primary Scripture:</b>	Exodus 14
<b>Supporting Scripture:</b>	Exodus 13:17–22; Exodus 15:1–2, 11–13; Psalm 106:7–12; Isaiah 43:16; Luke 9:31; 1 Corinthians 10:1–4; Hebrews 11:29
<b>Bible Timeline:</b>	After the Passover and Israel's escape from Egypt; before Israel's journey through the wilderness to Mount Sinai and before God gives the Law.

## PURPOSE OF THIS LESSON

Children should learn that the LORD is powerful, present, faithful, and able to make a way when there seems to be no way. In Exodus 14, God's people are trapped between Pharaoh's army and the sea, but Moses says, "The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still" (Exodus 14:14). This lesson teaches that people are weak, fearful, and unable to save themselves, but God is able to rescue completely.

Children should also see that this rescue points forward to Jesus. Israel could not free itself from Pharaoh, and sinners cannot free themselves from sin and death. God made a way through the sea for Israel, and God makes a way through the cross and resurrection for all who trust in Christ. The main point of the lesson is not, 'Be brave like Moses.' The main point is, 'Trust the God who saves.'

## BOOK & PASSAGE BACKGROUND

<b>Book Name:</b>	Exodus
<b>Traditional Author:</b>	Moses. Exodus says Moses wrote down God's words in key places, such as Exodus 24:4 and Exodus 34:27. Jesus also spoke of Moses as a true witness to God's saving plan in John 5:46.
<b>Date Written:</b>	During Moses' lifetime, likely during or soon after Israel's wilderness journey. Teachers do not need to focus on an exact date with children. What matters most is that Exodus records God's real acts in history.
<b>Original Audience:</b>	The people of Israel, especially the people God had rescued from Egypt, so they would know who the LORD is, what He had done, and how they were to live as His people.
<b>Purpose of the Book:</b>	Exodus shows that the LORD remembers His promises, rescues His people from slavery, defeats proud enemies, reveals His holy name, and comes to dwell with His people. Exodus 2:24 says God 'remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob,' and Exodus 6:6 says, 'I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians.'

## HISTORICAL & CULTURAL CONTEXT

<b>Pharaoh's Power</b>	Egypt was one of the great world powers of that time. Pharaoh was not just a king. He acted like he had absolute power, and the people of Egypt treated him as far more than an ordinary ruler. That matters because Exodus shows a direct clash between Pharaoh's pride and the LORD's true authority.
<b>Who Left Egypt</b>	The Israelites did not leave Egypt as a trained army. They left as families, with men, women, children, older people, and animals. Exodus 10:9 says, 'We will go with our young and our old.' Exodus 12:37–38 shows that a great company left Egypt. This means children were part of this rescue too.
<b>God's Route</b>	Exodus 13:17–18 says God did not lead Israel by the shortest road because the people were not ready for war. God chose a different path. God's way is not always the quickest way, but it is always the wisest way.
<b>The Pillar</b>	Exodus 13:21–22 says the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Israel was not lost. God Himself was leading them.
<b>Pharaoh's Chariots</b>	Pharaoh's chariots in Exodus 14:6–7 were powerful war machines in the ancient world. They were fast, frightening, and deadly. Humanly speaking, Israel had no hope against them. That is exactly why this lesson matters so much. The strength of Egypt was nothing compared to the power of the living God.
<b>The Name of the Water</b>	The Hebrew name for this body of water is Yam Suph. English Bibles often translate it Red Sea. Some explain the name as Sea of Reeds. The exact crossing place is debated, but Scripture is completely clear: God divided the waters, Israel crossed on dry ground, and the Egyptian army was destroyed when the waters returned (Exodus 14:21–28).
<b>The Sea in Scripture</b>	The sea in the Bible often represents danger, chaos, and human helplessness. Yet the Creator rules over the sea. In Genesis 1:9–10, God gathers the waters in creation. In Exodus 14, He rules the waters again in redemption. The God who created all things is also the God who saves.

## IMMEDIATE BIBLICAL CONTEXT

### What Happens Before This Passage

Exodus 12 records the Passover. God spared His people through the blood of the lamb and brought judgment on Egypt. Exodus 13 describes Israel leaving Egypt, the setting apart of the firstborn, and God leading His people by the pillar of cloud and fire. In Exodus 14:1–4, God tells Moses exactly where to camp and says Pharaoh will think Israel is trapped. God says, 'I will gain glory for myself through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord' (Exodus 14:4).

### What Happens After This Passage

After the crossing, 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.' Then Exodus 15 begins with a song of praise. Moses and the people worship God for His victory. Soon after, however, the people begin to complain in the wilderness. This reminds us that God can truly save His people, yet they still need to keep learning to trust Him day by day.

### Why This Moment Matters in God's Plan

This is the great break from Egypt. God's people are not merely let go; they are delivered. Pharaoh's pursuing power is broken. The Bible remembers this as one of God's great saving acts. Psalm 106:9 says, 'He rebuked the Red Sea, and it dried up; he led them through the depths as through a desert.' Hebrews 11:29 says, 'By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land.' Later Scripture treats this event as real history and as a pattern of God's saving work.

## KEY THEOLOGICAL TRUTHS — APPLIED TO THIS WEEK'S LESSON

**CORE TRUTH #1: What This Lesson Teaches About God**

God is in control, God is present, and God is mighty to save. Exodus 14 shows God directing everything. He tells Israel where to camp (Exodus 14:1–2). He tells Moses what Pharaoh will do (Exodus 14:3–4). He protects His people with the pillar (Exodus 14:19–20). He parts the sea (Exodus 14:21). He throws the Egyptian army into confusion (Exodus 14:24–25). He brings the waters back at exactly the right moment (Exodus 14:26–28). Nothing in this chapter is out of God's control. This matters today because children may think hard situations mean God has forgotten them. Exodus 14 teaches the opposite. Sometimes God leads His people into places where they must depend on Him completely.

**CORE TRUTH #2: What This Lesson Teaches About People**

People are fearful, forgetful, and unable to save themselves. When the Israelites see Pharaoh's army, they are terrified. Exodus 14:10 says they were 'terrified and cried out to the Lord.' Then they complain against Moses in Exodus 14:11–12. Even after seeing the plagues and the Passover, they are still quick to panic. Fear is real. The lesson should not shame children for feeling afraid. Instead, it should help them see that fear shows us how much we need God. The people's deeper problem was not that they felt fear. Their deeper problem was that they were ready to give up on trusting the Lord.

**CORE TRUTH #3: What This Lesson Teaches About Salvation**

God saves by His grace and power, not by human effort. Moses tells the people, 'Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today' (Exodus 14:13). Then he says, 'The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still' (Exodus 14:14). That does not mean God's people do nothing at all. They still must trust Him and move forward when He tells them to go (Exodus 14:15–16). But the victory belongs to the Lord. This is a beautiful picture of salvation. First, God saves His people through the blood of the Passover lamb. Then He brings them out through the sea. In the same way, Jesus saves sinners through His death and resurrection and brings them into new life.

**CORE TRUTH #4: Trusting God's Word**

This passage shows that God's Word is true and reliable. Before the crisis unfolds, God already tells Moses what Pharaoh will think and what He Himself will do (Exodus 14:3–4). Then everything happens exactly as God said. God's Word proves true. The rest of the Bible also speaks about this event as real history: Psalm 66:6, Psalm 106:7–12, Nehemiah 9:9–11, Acts 7:36, 1 Corinthians 10:1–2, and Hebrews 11:29 all look back to the crossing as something God truly did. We trust the Bible not because it is merely inspiring. We trust it because it is God's true Word.

**CORE TRUTH #5: God as Trinity**

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 real, active, present, and powerful. The full truth that God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is revealed more fully across the whole Bible. The Father plans salvation, the Son accomplishes salvation, and the Holy Spirit brings God's presence to His people. The God who rescued Israel at the sea is the same God we know through all of Scripture as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Do not use misleading analogies such as water, egg, clover, or one person acting out three roles. Teach the truth simply and directly.

**CMA ALIGNMENT & FOURFOLD GOSPEL CONNECTIONS**

<b>Jesus Our Savior</b>	Exodus 14 shows rescue by God's power, not human strength. Israel does not save itself. This matches the truth that Jesus is our Savior. Salvation belongs to the Lord.
<b>Jesus Our Sanctifier</b>	After God saves His people, He teaches them to trust, obey, and walk with Him. This lesson helps children see that saved people still need to grow in faith.
<b>Jesus Our Healer</b>	This passage shows God's care for frightened people. He sees their danger and protects them. Teachers may encourage children to pray to Jesus for help in body, heart, and mind, without pressure or hype.
<b>Jesus Our Coming King</b>	God's victory over Pharaoh points ahead to Christ's final victory over all evil. Evil does not win forever. Jesus will return, and His people will be safe with Him.

## RELIABILITY OF SCRIPTURE

Exodus 14 reads like remembered history, not made-up myth. It gives names of places (Exodus 14:2). It describes military details (Exodus 14:6–7). It shows the sequence of events very clearly: Israel camps, Pharaoh pursues, the people panic, God protects them, the sea parts, Israel crosses, Egypt follows, and the waters return.

The Bible also repeats this event in many places and in different kinds of writing. It is told in narrative in Exodus 14, celebrated in song in Exodus 15, remembered in worship in Psalms 66 and 106, recalled in prayer in Nehemiah 9, preached in Acts 7, and explained in New Testament teaching in 1 Corinthians 10 and Hebrews 11. Scripture speaks with one voice.

Teachers should be honest about what we know and what we do not know. We do not know the exact crossing point with certainty. Ancient shorelines can shift, and wilderness travel often leaves limited physical evidence. But not knowing the exact place does not mean the event did not happen.

Some people ask whether a strong wind could have been involved. Exodus 14:21 itself says the Lord drove the sea back by 'a strong east wind' all night. But that does not make the event ordinary. The timing, the dry ground, the safe crossing of Israel, and the destruction of Pharaoh's army show God's miraculous power.

It is also worth remembering that ancient kings did not usually write official records about humiliating defeats. So Egyptian silence would not be surprising.

## APOLOGETICS FOUNDATION

Children may hear people say, 'Miracles cannot happen,' or, 'This was only a made-up story.' This lesson gives a calm and simple answer: if God made the sea, He can rule the sea.

Scripture comes first. Exodus 14 says this happened. Exodus 15 praises God for it right away. Later writers in the Bible continue to speak about it as real history. That gives believers confidence.

A second helpful point is that the chapter includes many details that fit a real event: travel, panic, military pursuit, the movement of the pillar, wind through the night, dry ground, and the drowning of the Egyptian army. The passage does not read like fantasy. It reads like God acting in the real world.

A third helpful point is this: even if God used wind as part of the miracle, it was still God who did it. The Lord used His creation in a perfectly timed, powerful, saving way.

**Simple answer children can remember:** If God made the sea, He can rule the sea. And if He rules the sea, He can make a way through it.

## ANTICIPATED CHILD QUESTIONS

**Did the water really split open?**

Yes. Exodus 14:21–22 says the Lord divided the waters, and the Israelites went through on dry ground with water on both sides. Exodus 14:29 says the same thing again.

**Why did God lead them somewhere that looked like a trap?**

Because God planned to show His glory and teach His people to trust Him. Exodus 14:4 says God would gain glory over Pharaoh.

**Why didn't the Israelites just fight the Egyptians?**

Because this rescue was meant to show that God Himself saves. Exodus 14:14 says, 'The Lord will fight for you.'

**Why did God harden Pharaoh's heart?**

Pharaoh had already hardened his own heart many times before this, as seen in Exodus 8:15, Exodus 8:32, and Exodus 9:34. God righteously gave Pharaoh over to his rebellion and used even Pharaoh's stubbornness to show His own power and justice.

**Was it the Red Sea or the Sea of Reeds?**

The Hebrew name is Yam Suph. English Bibles often say Red Sea. Some explain it as Sea of Reeds. The exact place is debated, but the Bible is clear that God divided the water and brought His people safely through.

**Could it have just been a strong wind?**

God did use a strong east wind according to Exodus 14:21, but the event was still miraculous. God controlled the timing, made a dry path, protected His people, and judged the Egyptian army.

**Were children there too?**

Yes. Exodus 10:9 says the people left with 'our young and our old.' Children were part of God's rescue.

**How does this point to Jesus?**

God made a way for His people when they could not save themselves. Jesus is the greater Deliverer who makes the way to God through His death and resurrection. Luke 9:31 even speaks about Jesus' coming 'departure,' which carries the idea of an exodus.

**COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS****Misunderstanding: Moses had magic power.**

Correction: God did the miracle. Moses obeyed, but the Lord divided the sea (Exodus 14:16, 21).

**Misunderstanding: This lesson is mainly about human bravery.**

Correction: It is about God's saving power and faithful presence. The point is not courage. The point is trust.

**Misunderstanding: Faith means pretending you are not afraid.**

Correction: Faith means trusting God and obeying Him even when you are afraid. The Israelites were terrified, and God still rescued them.

**Misunderstanding: Israel was saved because they were better than Egypt.**

Correction: They were saved because God is merciful and faithful to His promises.

**Misunderstanding: God always removes danger immediately.**

Correction: This passage does not mean God always removes danger immediately. It does mean He is present, trustworthy, and able to lead His people through what they could never handle alone.

**Misunderstanding: The Trinity can be explained with a helpful illustration.**

Correction: Do not teach the Trinity with weak illustrations like water, eggs, or clover. Teach it plainly: God is one God in three Persons.

**GOSPEL CONNECTION**

Exodus 12 and Exodus 14 belong together. First, God saves His people through the blood of the Passover lamb. Then He brings them out through the sea, away from slavery and toward freedom.

That points clearly to Jesus. Jesus is our Passover Lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7). He saves us not from Pharaoh, but from sin, death, and judgment. At the sea, God made a way where there was no way. At the cross, Jesus made the way to God for sinners who could not save themselves. In the resurrection, He proved that the enemy does not get the last word.

This passage also helps explain the Christian life. God rescues first, then teaches His people to follow Him. We are not saved by obedience, but saved people are called to trust and obey. That fits the Fourfold Gospel well: Jesus our Savior rescues us, and Jesus our Sanctifier teaches us to walk with Him.

**TEACHER HEART PREPARATION**

Pray that you will teach this lesson with calm confidence. Children do not need an exaggerated version of the Red Sea. They need the true one.

Pray especially for children who feel trapped by fear, family trouble, sadness, or uncertainty. Exodus 14 is a strong passage for anxious hearts. God's words, 'Do not be afraid' (Exodus 14:13), are not empty comfort. They are grounded in His presence and power.

Ask God to help you keep Jesus at the center. Do not stop with, 'God helped them long ago.' Bring the lesson all the way to Christ. The God who made a way through the sea is the God who makes a way to eternal life through His Son.

**Suggested Teacher Prayer:**

*Lord, help me teach Your Word truthfully, clearly, and with faith. Keep me from making this lesson about human strength. Help me show the children that You are mighty to save, patient with fearful people, and faithful to Your Word. Point us all to Jesus, our Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King. Amen.*