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# The BIBLE STORY

## The Israelites Crossed the Red Sea

*Exodus 13:17–17:7*

After the tenth plague, the Israelites quickly left Egypt. The LORD led the people toward the Red Sea and the wilderness. As they traveled, the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to lead them during the day. At night, God was in a pillar of fire to give them light, so they could travel by day or by night. God told Moses to have the people camp near the sea. God said that Pharaoh would change his mind and pursue the Israelites. God wanted to prove to the Israelites that He is God.

Pharaoh and his officials did change their minds. Pharaoh got in his chariot and took his troops with him. He pursued the Israelites, and they caught up with them where they were camping near the sea.

The Israelites saw the Egyptians coming and they were afraid. “We are going to die!” they said. “We should have never left Egypt!”

But Moses said, “Do not be afraid. God brought you here, and He will fight for you. You will never see the Egyptians again.”

God told Moses what to do: “Stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide it so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground.” Then 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.

The Egyptians went after them. As soon as the Israelites were safely on the other side of the sea, Moses stretched out his hand again and the waters returned, covering the Egyptians and killing all of Pharaoh’s army. None of them survived.

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.”

Moses led the people away from the Red Sea, and they came to the wilderness. They could not find good water to drink, and they complained to Moses. God said, “If you obey Me and do what is right and keep My commands, I will not treat you like I treated the Egyptians. I am Yahweh,

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who heals you.” The Israelites came to a place called Elim (EE lim) where they found plenty of food and water. They camped there.

The Israelites left Elim and journeyed into the wilderness. They were hungry. They complained to Moses. “We were better off living in Egypt!” they said. “You brought us out here to die!” But Moses had not brought them out there to die. God knew what He was doing.

God said, “I have heard the complaints of the Israelites. Tell them: At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will eat bread until you are full. Then you will know that I am Yahweh your God.”

So at evening, quail came into the camp. In the morning, fine flakes like frost were on the ground. “What is it?” the Israelites asked. Moses said, “It is the bread the LORD has given you to eat.” The Israelites called it manna, which means “what is it?” They collected just enough to eat for the day. If they collected too much, the leftovers went bad. On the sixth day, they collected twice as much because the seventh day was the Sabbath; no one collected any manna on the Sabbath. The Israelites ate manna for 40 years, until they came to the border of the land of Canaan (KAY nuhn).

The Israelites moved about the wilderness as the Lord told them to do. One day they came to a camp with no water. “Give us something to drink,” they told Moses. “Why are you complaining to me?” Moses asked. “You brought us out here to die” the Israelites said. They forgot that the Lord had a plan for them.

“Lord, what should I do?” Moses cried out. God showed Moses a rock and instructed him to hit it with his staff. Water came out of it, and the people drank. It was a sign that the Lord was with them.

*Christ Connection: God created a way for the Israelites to escape the Egyptians. In the same way, God created the way for people to escape the penalty of sin—His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus is the only way to get to God.*

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# Large Group LEADER

**Session Title:** The Israelites Crossed the Red Sea

**Bible Passage:** Exodus 13:17–17:7

**Big Picture Question:** Is anything too hard for God to do? Nothing is impossible for God.

**Key Passage:** Exodus 6:7

**Unit Christ Connection:** God saved His people from physical captivity in Egypt as He would one day send Jesus to save His people from spiritual captivity.

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## Countdown

- countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as large group time begins.

- archaeologist attire for large group leader

## Introduce the session (1 minute)

*[Dress as an archaeologist in white and khaki clothing, work boots, and a wide-brimmed hat. Begin calling for the professor while off stage.]*

**Leader** • Professor! Professor! Has anyone seen the professor? He was just here five minutes ago! We were working on uncovering an artifact right here. The professor sure is a busy guy. Maybe he'll show up in a minute. He told me that he really wants to meet the kids who have been helping me uncover all these ancient artifacts.

- Timeline Map

Tip: Point to each story on the timeline map as you review the Bible stories.

## Timeline map (1 minute)

**Leader** • Does anyone remember what artifact we found first and what Bible story it represented? Good! The basket represented the story of Moses' birth and his calling by God to lead the Israelites.

What was the second artifact we found? We learned all

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about the first nine plagues including the frogs. The toy frog was a great reminder of how God showed the people He is the one true God.

Last week, what did we find? We found an ancient cross that represented the story of the Passover. The Passover was a special night for the Israelites because that was how God chose to save them. The Passover is special for us because it points to Jesus and how He died on the cross to save us.

- pottery jar
- piece of paper, folded
- Create a spot where an archaeological discovery is in progress. Partially hide an old pottery jar in this spot, surrounded by tools. Jar can be any size.
- Place the folded piece of paper on stage in a spot kids can easily see.

## Big picture question (2 minutes)

**Leader** • We have uncovered some great archaeological discoveries the last three weeks. Let me look around.

Maybe we have another artifact we can find.

*[Walk over to the spot with the archaeology tools and the hidden pottery jar. Depending on how you arrange the jar you can finish unburying it or just find it already unburied.]*

**Leader** • OK, I've got it. Oh, this artifact is really buried.

Here it is. Wow, what a cool jar! I love jars. They are so useful for holding and carrying water, for storing things.

The Israelites would have used a jar to store water and food. Oh look, here is a note from the professor: "The big picture question: *Is anything too hard for God to do?*" Wow! That is a great big, big picture question. What do you think the answer is? Really, you think that's the answer? I think we need to check our Bibles and find today's story. Let's see if the Israelites agreed with your answer.

- "The Israelites Crossed the Red Sea" video
- Bibles
- Big Picture Question Slide or Poster
- Bible Story Picture Slide or Poster

## Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Exodus 13 and tell the Bible story in your own words, or show the Bible story video "The Israelites Crossed the Red Sea."

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**Leader** • God provided for the Israelites a lot. What are some of the ways He provided for the Israelites? Yes, He parted the Red Sea, He led them with a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire, He gave them water to drink, and He provided manna and quail to eat. God provided a lot of things that the Israelites needed.

*Is anything too hard for God to do? Nothing is impossible for God.* OK, this time when I ask you the big picture question, I want you to yell the answer. *Is anything too hard for God to do?* Great response! *Nothing is impossible for God.* Absolutely nothing is impossible for God to do.

The Israelites chose to worry and complain that the Red Sea was in the way. They told Moses that they were better off living in Egypt in physical captivity. They complained again when they were hungry and wanted food. Do you think the Israelites believed that *nothing is impossible for God?* Did the Israelites act and talk like they thought *nothing is impossible for God?*

We can learn from the Israelites. *Is anything too hard for God to do? Nothing is impossible for God.* If we know and love God, our choices, our actions, our attitudes, and our words should show people that we believe that *nothing is impossible for God.* Christians know God can do anything because God has rescued them from sin. We know that Jesus lived a perfectly sinless life, died for our sins, and rose again. He can do anything He desires because nothing is impossible for Him; He is sovereign and all-powerful.

## **The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (optional)**

Review the gospel plan provided to help kids understand how they can become a Christian. Guide kids to read the

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Scriptures in their own Bible. Remember to provide kids an opportunity to respond by having counselors ready to talk one-on-one with kids who have questions or want to become a Christian.

### **Key passage (5 minutes)**

- Key Passage Slide or Poster
- “I Am Yahweh!” song

**Leader** •Join me in singing our key passage song as we remember *Is anything too hard for God to do? Nothing is impossible for God.*

Sing “I Am Yahweh!” Lead kids to read the passage. Allow kids to ask any questions they have about the key passage.

### **Discussion starter video (5 minutes)**

- “That’s Impossible” video

**Leader** •Have you ever faced an obstacle that was impossible for you to overcome? Raise your hand if you have. Check out this video about impossible events.

Show “That’s Impossible” video.

**Leader** •Was each of those things impossible? Have you ever decided something was impossible before you tried it? Are some things impossible for us to do? *Is anything too hard for God to do? Nothing is impossible for God.*

### **Sing (5 minutes)**

- “You Lift Me Up” song

**Leader** •Since nothing is impossible for God, let’s praise Him for all that He does and all that He is.

Sing “You Lift Me Up.”

### **Prayer (1 minute)**

**Leader** •Well I guess it’s time for you to go to your small groups. I wish you could have met the professor. He sure is a great guy and you would have enjoyed hearing him talk about biblical archaeology. Watch your small group leader for the signal to head to your small group. Let

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me pray for you first. Thanks for being here and helping us uncover the answer to our big picture question, *is anything too hard for God to do? Nothing is impossible for God.*

Close in prayer.

## **Alternate ending:**

### **Prayer (1 minute)**

- Recruit another adult to dress in archaeological clothing and play the role of the professor. You may choose to add lines for the professor to say.

**Leader** • Well I guess it's time for you to go to your small groups. I wish you could have met the professor. He sure is a great guy and you would have enjoyed hearing him talk about biblical archaeology.

*[Professor enters but is unnoticed by the Large Group Leader. Professor can start working at the archaeological site or just stand around waiting for the kids to point out his presence to the Large Group Leader.]*

**Leader** • What? The professor? I know, I'm sorry you won't get a chance to meet the professor. He's a great biblical archaeologist. What? He's here? What?

Professor! Oh good, you made it in time. Let me introduce you to my friends. This is the professor. Everyone say "Hello." I'm glad you made it in time. It is time for everyone to go to small group and look at our Bible story about the Israelites crossing the Red Sea. I have enjoyed discovering ancient artifacts and sharing some great Bible stories about Moses and the Israelites with you. I hope you have a great week!

*[Turn and begin to talk with the professor as the kids are dismissed.]*

## **Dismiss to small groups**