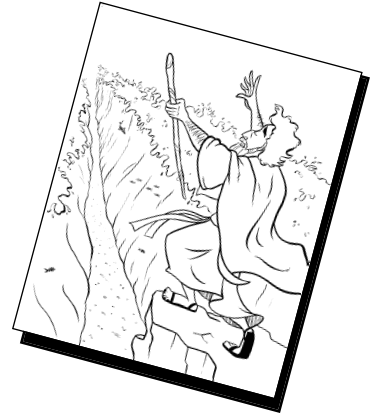




# God Parts the Red Sea

*Exodus 14–15*



## LESSON GOAL

Students will praise God for His power and deliverance.

## BIBLE TRUTHS

- God led Israel to the Red Sea.
- God wanted Israel to trust and praise His power.
- God parted the Red Sea so the Israelites could escape.
- God destroyed the Egyptian army in the Red Sea.
- The Israelites worshiped God for delivering them.

## KEY VERSE

“Then I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, so that he will pursue them; and I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, that the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD.’ And they did so” (Exodus 14:4).

## APPLICATION

- Submit to the awesome power of God.
- Praise God for His mighty deeds.
- Trust in God’s love for His people.

## NEXT WEEK

God Preserves Israel  
Read Exodus 15:22–17:7.

### Symbol Key



Craft



Finger Play



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Center



Activity



Q & A



Age Group



## PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

*“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul... You shall teach them to your children” (Deuteronomy 11:18–19).*

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

### Bible Background

God had kept His Word that first Passover night. While there was silence among the Israelites, every Egyptian household was marked by screams of despair (Ex. 11:6). God had passed over the Israelites who had eaten the Passover meal and smeared the sacrificial blood on their doorframes. But the time for judgment had come upon Egypt and her gods. Every Egyptian family had a father, son, or brother who had been slain; even Pharaoh’s firstborn son, the heir to the throne, had been killed (Ex. 11:5). Pharaoh was quick to send a messenger to demand the quick exit of the Israelites. The Egyptians, who were afraid of more suffering, begged the Israelites to leave (Ex. 12:33). The Israelites wasted no time in leaving their 400 years of bondage, not even waiting for their bread to rise! But before long, the Egyptians wanted the Israelite slaves back, and Israel despondently wished they had never left. The situation looked bleak for Israel, but God purposely moved them into a helpless position so that they would rely on Him and rejoice in His salvation.

### God Leads His People

The Lord knew the hearts of His people perfectly. He knew that if He took them into the Promised Land by the most direct route, they would quickly face war, become terrified, and return to Egypt (Ex. 13:17). So instead of leading Israel along the heavily fortified Mediterranean coast, God led the people through the wilderness of Egypt (13:18). God’s guidance was unmistakable. His presence was before the people “by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light” (13:21). With a powerful but gracious hand, the Lord led His people through the Egyptian desert. In an unusual route, He turned the children of Israel southwest instead of northeast, the direction of the Promised Land. Although the exact locations of Pi Hahiroth, Migdol, and Baal Zephon (Ex. 14:2) are unknown today, the best estimate is that God had the people camp on the west side of the Bitter Lakes area, north of the Gulf of Suez. (The name of this body of water is often translated as the “Red Sea,” but the term can also be translated “sea of reeds.” Because Israel went directly into the Wilderness of Shur [Ex. 15:22], this sea is almost definitely not the Gulf of Suez extending from the Red Sea. The most satisfying alternative is the Bitter Lakes area.)

### Between the Sea and a Hard Heart

In Egypt, Pharaoh’s grief had turned to rage. God hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and Pharaoh again desired to have mastery over the Israelites (Ex. 14:4). Pharaoh regretted the loss of millions of slaves (14:5). He misinterpreted God’s unusual leading of the Israelites in the desert to be evidence of their confusion (Ex. 14:3) and decided to retrieve his lost possession. With his elite charioteers and all his army assembled, Pharaoh set off to pursue the Israelites (14:6–9).

### Additional Reference Materials

*Moses and the Gods of Egypt: Studies in Exodus*  
by John J. Davis

*The MacArthur Study Bible* by John MacArthur

Although the Israelites knew that God was leading them and had set off in boldness (Ex. 14:8), their hearts quaked when they saw the approaching troops. Behind them was the sea, and in front of them were the Egyptian warriors. They cried out to the Lord, but their fear quickly turned to resentment. They regretted their salvation from Egypt and doubted God's power to save them. They said to Moses, "Better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness" (14:12).

### **"The LORD Will Fight for You"**

Moses encouraged the people not to be afraid. They simply had to "stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD" (Ex. 14:13). The Lord would fight for them. The angel of God and the pillar of cloud moved behind Israel, separating the Egyptians from them (14:19–20). At the same time, the cloud was darkness to the Egyptians, but gave light to the Israelites. The Egyptians could not attack the Israelites (14:20). Moses stretched out his rod over the sea, and the Lord caused a wind to divide the sea and dry the ground (14:21). God used a wind, but this miracle is beyond natural explanation. God's Word says that the Israelites walked "into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left" (14:22). Our imaginations cannot do justice to the wonder God performed. God, who controls all events and all nature, revealed Himself dramatically, demonstrating in a tangible way how powerful He is.

As the Lord fought for Israel that night (Ex. 14:20), Israel crossed through the sea on dry ground. God caused the pillar of cloud to move, and the Egyptians followed behind. God hardened their hearts once again in order to reveal His glory (Ex. 14:17–18). Early in the morning, God "troubled the army of the Egyptians" (14:24). The Lord made their chariots impossible to control on the sea floor, and the Egyptians began looking for a way to escape (14:25). After the Israelites had crossed through the sea, Moses again stretched out his rod, and just as the sun rose, the water returned to its normal depth (14:27). Every soldier who had followed the Israelites into the sea died (14:28). Before their demise, the Egyptians confessed that "the LORD fights for [Israel]."

### **The Song of Moses**

When the people saw "the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt,...the people feared the Lord and believed His servant Moses" (Ex. 14:31). God had intentionally led the people into the Egyptian desert and wedged them between the sea and Pharaoh. He had placed them in a situation where there was nothing they could do. The Israelites had been helpless to deliver themselves from Egypt, and they now were unable to maintain that freedom. Their dependence had to rest upon God. But they foolishly looked back to the time before their redemption as somehow better. How foolish and how quick to forget! But also, how sadly similar to believers who quickly deceive themselves into thinking that a life of ease is better than their current trials. The elect can be certain that all things work together for good to those who love God (Rom. 8:28). God taught the people to fear Him, the foundation of knowing Him. When God allows His children to endure suffocating pressures, our cry to Him can be made with confidence that the trials He sends secure our growth.

Those trials also result in His glory. After the believer sees all things working together for his good, his eyes lift from his difficulty to his Redeemer. The trial becomes an opportunity for praise as God's grace is remembered. This is exactly how Israel responded. In one of the most beautiful moments in their history, Israel was united with Moses, their leader, in glorying in the multitude of God's attributes. Their song is recorded in Exodus 15. The Lord is exalted for His strength, salvation, might, and power. They recounted how God delivered them as "the horse and its

rider He has thrown into the sea” (Ex. 15:1). The people responded to the greatness of His excellence (15:7) and recognized that He is unique among the gods of men, “glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders” (15:11). The Israelites knew that God would bring those He had purchased and plant them in the Promised Land. They looked to the present work of God as strong hope for the future.

Being squeezed by God’s trials is painful. But the Lord is faithful. He leads us where He chooses; He never is surprised or loses control; and He fights for those who belong to Him. The result is the sanctification of the saint as he learns to fear God and the glorification of God as he praises Him as He is.

## POINT TO THE TRUTH

*“Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth” (Psalm 78:1).*

This section includes questions to review last week’s lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week’s lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



### Review Questions

*Use these questions to review and reinforce key truths.*

What instructions did God give Moses for the Israelites to follow on their last night in Egypt?

*God told the Israelites to kill and roast a lamb, put the blood around their doors, and stay in their houses.*

What was the name of the special night when God took His people out of Egypt?  
*Passover.*

What happened at midnight on the night of Passover?

*God sent the tenth plague to Egypt. All the firstborn children of the families in Egypt who did not have blood around their doors died at midnight. Pharaoh told the Israelites to leave Egypt quickly.*

Why did the Israelites eat their Passover meal with their coats on?

*They were obeying God so that they would be ready to leave Egypt quickly.*

Why did God keep the Israelites safe in their houses?

*They were His chosen people.*



### Flashlight Fun

Make the room dark and use flashlights to see as you walk around the room on a masking-tape path. Tell the students that they will hear about a walk at night when an unusual light guided God’s people in the desert.



### Freeze

Pretend to be packing for a trip while playing music. When the music stops, the students should freeze and look at what each person is doing. Repeat while acting



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### Things That Frighten

Ask the class what things make them afraid. Write down the answers, and use the list for a discussion. Look up verses to help explain what God wants us to remember when we are afraid. The following are some suggested verses: 2 Timothy 1:7; Romans 8:15; 1 John 4:18; Psalm 91:4–7; Psalm 91:10–11; Proverbs 3:25–26; Isaiah 54:14; Psalm 56:11; Psalm 23:4–5; Romans 8:28, 31, 35–39; Psalm 31:24; John 14:27; Psalm 27:1, 3; Hebrews 13:6. In today’s lesson, we will learn what made the Israelites afraid and what Moses told them God would do.



### Parting the Waters

Fill a small tub or bucket with water. Ask the students whether they think you can separate the water with your hand. Run your hand through the water and emphasize the fact that you cannot do it. Turn on an electric fan and try “separating” the water. Explain that in today’s lesson, students will learn that God separated an entire sea of water and that only God could do such a miracle.

## PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

*“Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done” (Psalm 78:4).*

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included that you can use to proclaim your worship to God. Use the lesson questions to check the students’ understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

### Bible Lesson

#### Reading of the Text

Read portions of Exodus 14–15.

We learned about the Passover last week. Do you remember the last plague that God sent? The firstborn son of every Egyptian died, even Pharaoh’s son! The Egyptians were very sad and afraid, and they begged the Israelites to leave. Today, we will see what happened to the Israelites after they left.

Do you know where the Israelites were going? That is right—the Promised Land! God had promised the Israelites a land that would be their very own. They started their journey to the Promised Land when they left Egypt. But the Promised Land was very far away, and the fastest road there was not safe. So the Lord led them through the wilderness instead. But the wilderness did not have a road to follow, so during the daytime, God led them in a pillar of cloud, and at night, He led them in a pillar of fire so they could see. Eventually, they stopped to rest and set up their camp on the shore of the Red Sea.

What do you think Pharaoh did after the Israelites left? Remember, before they left, Pharaoh was very sad because his son had died, but after they left, he became very angry with Israel, and he decided that he was going to bring them back to Egypt to be his slaves again. He gathered all his armies and chased after the Israelites! He thought the Israelites were very foolish for going into the wilderness instead of using the main road. When he finally caught up with them, he had them trapped! All the Egyptian armies were behind the Israelites, and the big Red Sea was in front of them. The Israelites had nowhere to run! They were very afraid, and they did not think that God could save them. They became angry with the Lord. They said to Moses, "It would have been better to stay in Egypt and serve the Egyptians than to die out here in the wilderness!" They wished that they had never left Egypt.

But Moses encouraged the people to not be afraid. He said, "The Lord will fight for you!" And He did! God moved the cloud that had been leading them in between the Israelites and the Egyptians, so the Egyptians could not see anything. Then God told Moses to stretch out his rod over the Red Sea, and when he did, the Red Sea parted and made a path for the Israelites to cross to the other side. The ground where the water had just been was even dry! They walked through the middle of the sea, with a giant wall of water on both sides of them! The Israelites got all the way across, and God moved the cloud so the Egyptians could see again. They went racing after the Israelites, but God caused them to get stuck. Moses had crossed the sea, and while the Egyptians were at the bottom of where the sea had been, he stretched out his rod again, and the water came crashing down. Every Egyptian soldier who had followed the Israelites into the sea died, and all the Israelites were safe.

The Israelites praised and worshiped and sang songs to the Lord after they crossed the Red Sea because they had been reminded of the awesome power of God.

They had forgotten that God is mighty and powerful and had promised to bring them to the Promised Land. But the Lord helped them remember by leading them into a situation where they were helpless and then reminding them of how mighty He is. God wants us to remember that He is mighty and powerful, and He wants us to trust in His love for His people.



## Lesson Questions

Where were the Israelites headed when they left Egypt?

*To the Promised Land.*

How did God lead the Israelites?

*He led them with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.*

Who went after the Israelites?

*The Egyptian army.*

How did the Israelites cross the Red Sea?

*God told Moses to stretch his rod over the sea. The water parted, and the Israelites were able to walk safely to the other side.*

What happened to the Egyptian army?

*God told Moses to stretch his rod over the sea again. This time, the water fell down on the Egyptian army, and they died.*

What did the Israelites do when they saw how God had protected them?

*They worshiped and sang praises to Him.*

## Presentation Ideas



### A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards with the lesson.



### Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces to present with the lesson.



### Treasure-Box Object

The object for the treasure box for this lesson is an orange flame taped to the end of a paint stick, representing the pillar of fire that led the Israelites by night. Taped to the back of the flame is a cloud to remind the students of the pillar of cloud that led the Israelites by day. After the Bible lesson, take the flame and cloud stick out of the treasure box and hold it high in the air as you sing the new verse to the song.



### Celebration Band

The Israelites were very thankful to God! He had kept them safe from the Egyptians who had been chasing them. The Israelites started to praise and worship God. Pass out some tambourines, bells, triangles, or cymbals, and have some students play the instruments while the rest of the group dances to the music. Repeat until everyone gets to play an instrument.



### Water to the Left and Right

Supplies: 3–4 rolls of blue cellophane, cutouts of fish and other sea creatures

Directions: Before class, cover a section of wall with wide pieces of blue cellophane, leaving a two- to three-foot gap between the pieces. Attach the fish cutouts behind the cellophane with packing tape or thumbtacks. (Variation: If a dry-erase board is available, draw several large fish on the right and left ends of the board, and then cover the drawings with blue cellophane, leaving a two- to three-foot gap in between.) When you begin your lesson, ask the students to guess what they will learn today. Explain that they will learn about a miracle by which God separated a sea of water, creating walls of water on the right and left.

## Praise and Worship

*Awesome God*

*Go Down, Moses*

*I Will Call upon the Lord*

*Mighty Is Our God*

*My God Is So Great*

*Praise the Name of Jesus*

*Trust and Obey*



### God Parts the Red Sea

Pharaoh chased after the Israelites.

*(Pump arms as if running.)*

They cried to God in fear and fright.

*(Hands at sides of mouth, look up.)*



Moses told them, "The Lord will fight."

*(Point out, then point up.)*

The pillar of cloud was guard and light.

*(Raise hands overhead and open and close fists.)*

The sea was parted left and right.

*(Keep hands up, then move left hand down in wavy motion, repeat with right hand.)*

They walked through on dry land that night.

*(March slowly in place.)*

To the Egyptians, God displayed His might,

*(Make a pyramid with hands and arms, then flex muscles.)*

Israel believed and rejoiced at the sight.

*(Hold hand over heart and hand over eyes.)*

## PRACTICE THE TRUTH

*"That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments" (Psalm 78:7).*

Choose ideas from this section to review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



### Cloud and Fire Activity Sheet

Give each student a piece of black construction paper and a piece of blue construction paper that have been glued back to back. Let the students glue cotton balls on the blue side of the paper to represent God leading the Israelites by a cloud during the day. The students can tear bits of orange and yellow "flames" and glue them on the black side to represent God leading the Israelites by a fire at night. Have the students glue copies of Exodus 13:21 to the bottom of each page.



### A Pillar of Cloud

Materials: cotton balls, construction paper, glue sticks, double-sided tape

Directions: Begin by folding a sheet of construction paper one inch from the edge lengthwise. Glue or tape cotton balls all over the rest of the paper, leaving the one-inch fold empty. Then apply glue or tape to the one inch fold, and roll and fasten the craft into a tube shape.



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### Making Moses Memories

If your students are making the scrapbook discussed in the first lesson, reduce a coloring sheet to about 4 x 6 inches. Have each student color his picture, cut it out, and glue it to the next page of his scrapbook.



### Hearts of Clay

Before class, mold two hearts out of red modeling clay. Bake one heart in the oven to make it hard. If you conducted this activity during lesson three, you will already

have the hearts prepared.

Before the lesson, present the hearts to the class. Explain that a “soft heart” is one that can be molded by God because God has shown mercy to that person. An example of someone with a soft heart is Moses. In contrast, a hard heart is fixed in that condition and cannot be changed. You may choose to pass around the hearts so that students can feel the difference between the two. Emphasize that the “hard heart” will represent Pharaoh during the lesson. Read John 12:40 and Romans 9:18 to explain how God can justly show mercy to some and at the same time harden the hearts of others to fulfill His sovereign will. While teaching through the lesson, alternate holding the two hearts when talking about Moses and Pharaoh.

### **Coloring Sheets**

Give each student a copy of the coloring sheets at the back of this lesson. The students can color the pages in class or at home.



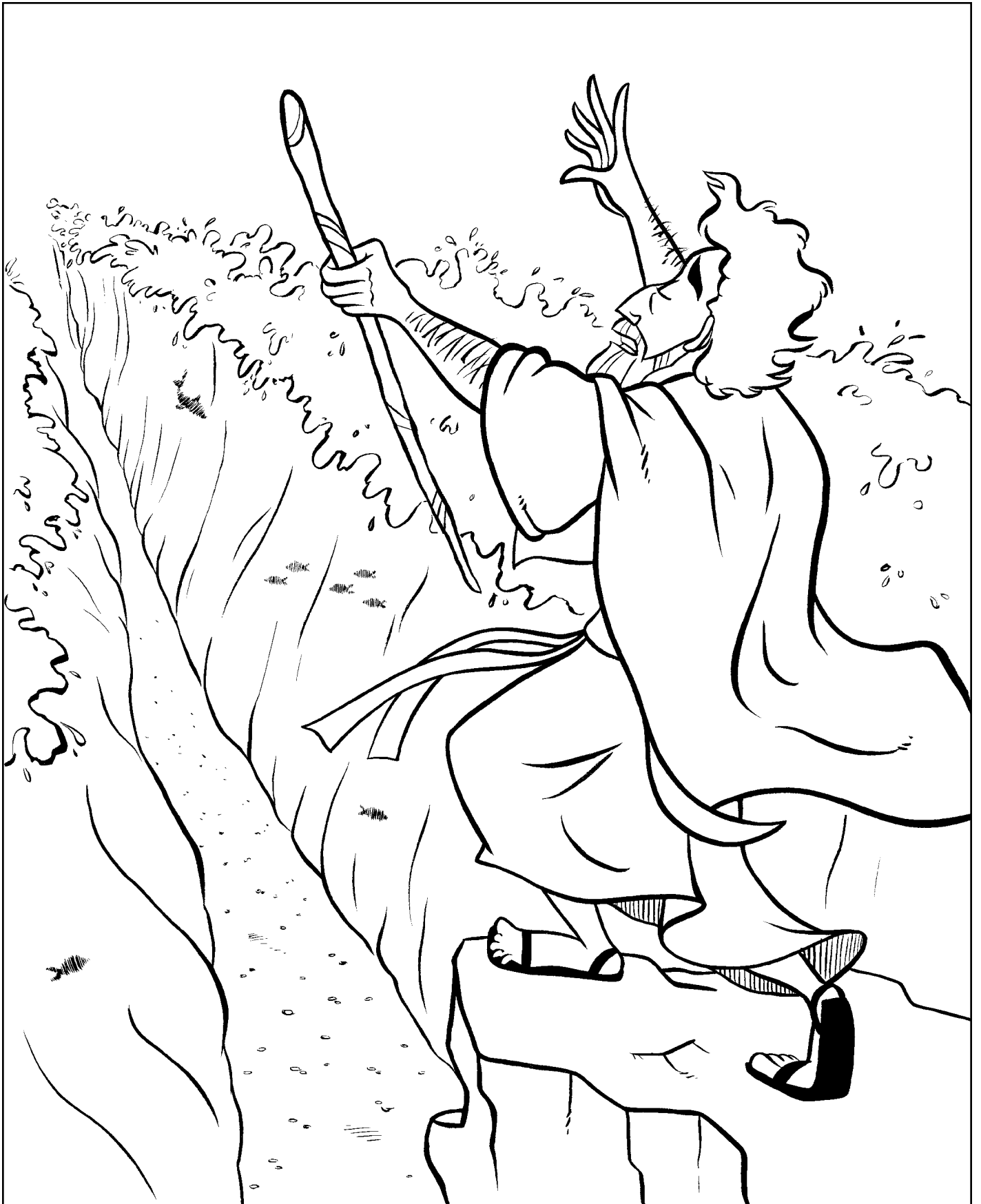
### **MEMORY VERSE**

“Honor your father and your mother” (Exodus 20:12).



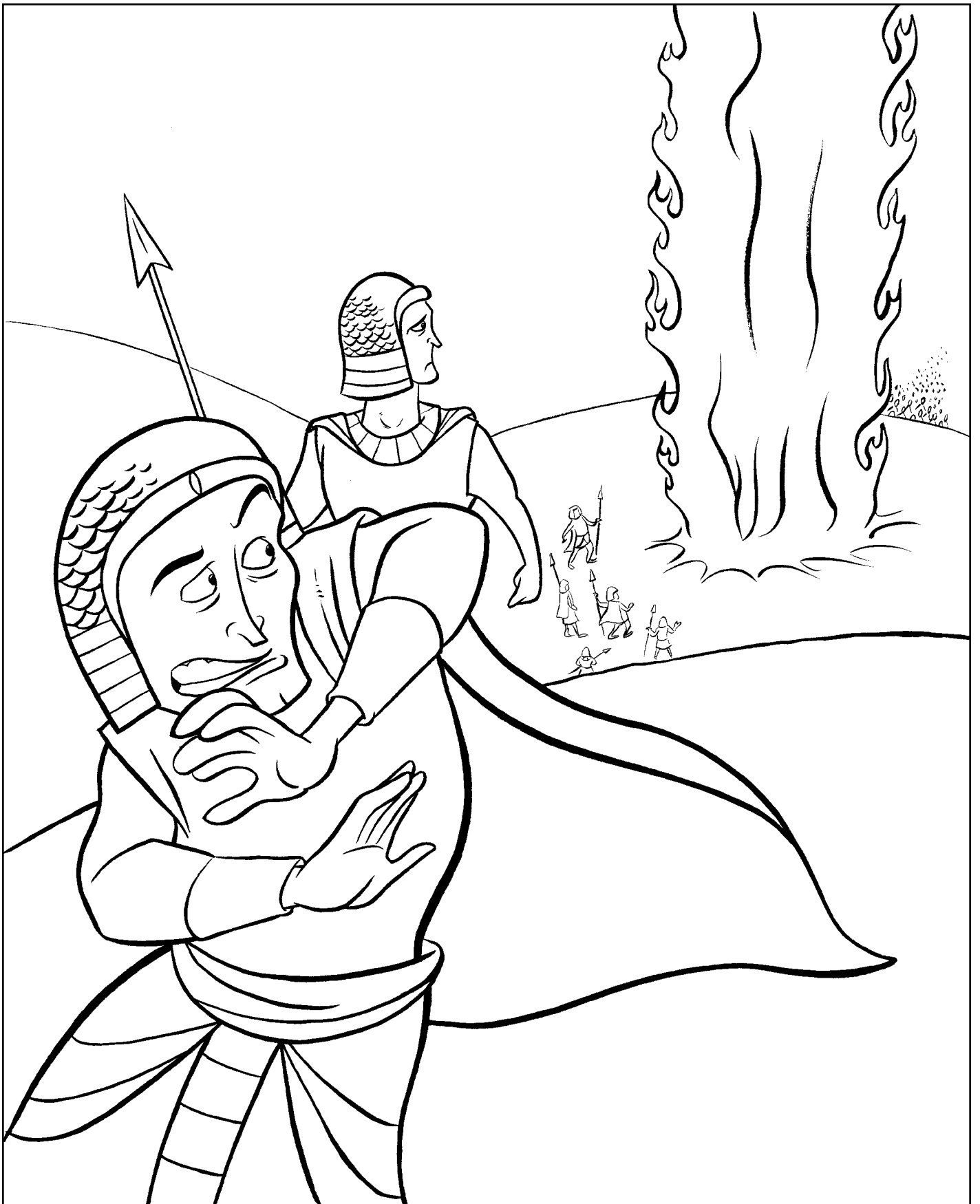
### **Fifth Commandment**

If you have decided to memorize the Ten Commandments, post the fifth commandment (Exodus 20:12). Talk to the students about different ways they can honor their parents by being obedient, showing respect, and showing love, for example. Explain to the students that when they do not honor their parents, they are disobeying God and breaking one of His commands.



**“Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided” (Exodus 14:21).**





**“Now it came to pass, in the morning watch, that the LORD looked down upon the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and He troubled the army of the Egyptians” (Exodus 14:24).**

