



God Makes a Way

(based on Exodus 13:17–22, 14:1–22)

The Hebrew people were free. God, the great I AM, had freed them from slavery under Pharaoh.

The people walked as fast as they could.

Astonishingly, a pillar of cloud appeared in front of them. It showed them the way to go when the sun was high in the sky. At night, a pillar of fire led the way through the darkness. Moses reassured the people that their God was leading the way.

The pillar of cloud led them to the Red Sea where the people camped along the shore.

Suddenly they heard the sound of horses. Then they saw a great cloud of dust. Just as they had feared, Pharaoh and his army were chasing them! Pharaoh had changed his mind. He was coming to take them back to Egypt to be his slaves.

The people knew they were trapped. The Red Sea was too big to cross. It was too wide to go around. They had no boats! They were terrified. What would happen to them?

God told Moses, “Hold your hand over the water.”

Moses did as he was instructed. Suddenly a big wind began to blow. It blew and blew and blew. The wind pushed some of the water to one side. It pushed some of the water to the other side. Then right in the middle of the sea, a dry path appeared.

“Hurry, hurry!” shouted Moses. “The Lord has given us a way to cross.”

Everyone lined up to pass through the sea. One by one, they ran to the other side. All the families and all the animals crossed over. Their feet ached and the air in their lungs burned, but they ran as fast as they could.

When everyone was safe across the sea, Moses stretched out his hand once more. Suddenly, silence. The wind stopped blowing. The two walls of water crashed into each other, filling the sea again. The path through the sea was gone.

The people gave thanks. The Lord God had saved them. The great I AM would always be with them on their journey.



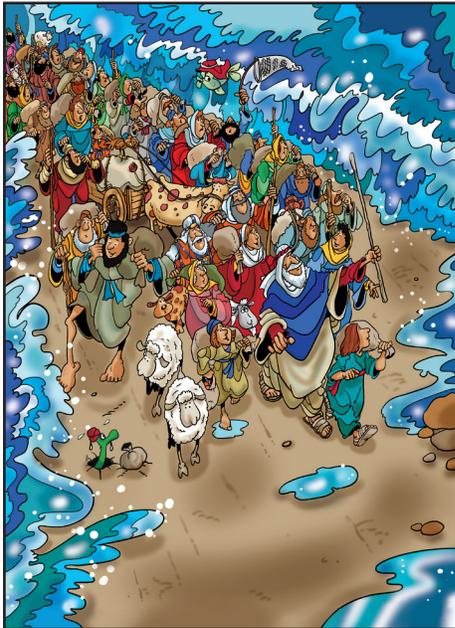
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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- Identify the grace moments in this story. Where do you see God acting? You probably don't have a story as dramatic as this one, but is there a family story you all can tell and identify God's presence with you in that story?
- Make blue and yellow streamers for each person. Reread the story and ask all to wave the blue streamer when they hear a part that makes them feel sad and wave the yellow streamer when they hear a part that made the people in the story happy. After, wonder why they waved the streamers when they did. Affirm all responses.



Responding to God's Grace

- Reflect on the journey the Hebrew slaves took: Where did the journey begin? Where did it end? What kinds of challenges did they meet? What were some of the best moments? The worst moments? Create a game based on the journey out of Egypt. Examine sample game boards for ideas. Create “game cards” with messages such as “the people are tired and grumpy, move back two spaces” or “God parts the Red Sea, move ahead three spaces.”
- The Hebrew people saw God's presence and guidance in a pillar of fire and a pillar of a cloud. What might be your pillars today? Talk together about times you have seen or felt God's presence and guidance. Perhaps record these moments in a journal and reflect back on them each month.

Celebrating in Gratitude

- Take turns being Moses, leading others in a game of Follow the Leader. Suggest jumping, hopping, crawling, flapping arms, and so on. Or select an animal or person that followed Moses in the desert.
- During Passover, when Jewish people celebrate the exodus, they thank God for freeing them from slavery. One of the prayers they recite is Psalm 136. Read the first four verses of this psalm. Name some freedoms that you enjoy. Prompt others to respond, “Thank you, God, for freedom.”