

## HOW GOD SAVED HIS PEOPLE

## UNIT ONE: God Rescued His People

**Lesson 7:****Through the Sea.. And Free!****CONTENT:**

1. After the Israelites left Egypt, God led them by a pillar of cloud and fire to the Red Sea. Then Pharaoh changed his mind and came after them with a huge army. The Israelites were very afraid, because they were caught between the sea and the army.
2. God told Moses to stretch his stick out over the sea. The waters parted and the Israelites crossed over safely. Moses then stretched out his stick again and the sea returned, destroying the Egyptian army. The Israelites were free at last.
3. One day Jesus went to John the Baptist and asked him to baptise him. He went down into the water and up again. This showed that he would die and then rise again. This was how he would set us free.
4. At our Baptism the priest poured water on us and said, "..... *I baptise you in the name of the Father...*' At that moment we were freed from sin and from our enemy, Satan. We thank God for setting us free.



**ASSIGNMENT:** Read handout at home. Find out and write the date of your Baptism.

**REFERENCES:** Exodus 13:21-22, 14:1-31; Matthew 3:13-17. CCC 536, 1221, 1237, 1263.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** Handouts, Blackboard for sketch (optional).

**I. STARTER:**

- Do you like riddles? Today I'll start by asking you a riddle. (There's a prize for the first correct answer!) You must have heard about Hansel and Gretel and how a wicked witch kept them prisoner in her house. One day they escaped, but as they came out of the door, they found that the house was surrounded by sinking sand. They heard the witch behind them, laughing. They couldn't go forward, or they would sink into the sand, and they didn't want to go back. How did they escape?  
[After the students try to find a solution, give the answer:] They made a sandwich (SAND+WITCH), ate it up, and went free! This is a silly answer, but it is something like what happened to the Israelites.

**II. DEVELOPMENT:**

After the special meal which the Israelites ate in Egypt they were allowed to go free, but after they had left Pharaoh said, "Why did I let them go? Now we won't have any slaves to work for us! Call the army! Get all the horses and chariots ready. We will chase those lazy Israelites and bring them back!"

Meanwhile God was with his people. They saw a big pillar of cloud moving in front of them. Moses said, "Follow the cloud! It is God, showing us the way!" At night, the cloud became a pillar of fire, so that they could see in the darkness and keep travelling. The cloud kept moving until they reached a sea, called the Red Sea. Then it stopped. The people looked at the sea and asked, "Now what? Where are we supposed to go now?" Just then, someone shouted, "Someone is following us! Pharaoh's army is coming!" they looked back and saw, far away, a cloud of dust and horses and chariots moving towards them.

The people were very frightened. Like Hansel and Gretel, they were stuck! They couldn't go forward and they couldn't go back. Behind them was Pharaoh's army, (like the witch) and in front of them was the deep sea (like the sinking sand). They began to cry to Moses, "Why did you bring us out here? Now we will all be killed by Pharaoh's army!"

But Moses was not afraid, because he trusted God. He said, "Be quiet! Don't get frightened. God will fight for us!" He waited to see what God would do.

Then God told Moses, “Tell the people to go forward. And you, stretch out your stick over the sea. Soon everyone will know that I am the Lord!”

So Moses did as God said. He stretched his stick towards the sea. Suddenly a great miracle took place. As the people looked, the water of the sea moved to the right and left. It piled up on each side like two huge walls of water and there, in front of the people was a dry path in the middle of the sea!

The people gave a great shout and began to run forward. All night long they hurried across the sea: men, women, children, sheep and donkeys and goats. As they went, they could hear the Egyptian army coming closer and closer. The Egyptians followed them into the sea. At last by morning, all the Israelites had reached the other side.

Then Moses held out his stick over the sea again (from the other side!) and the walls of water broke. The sea came crashing down to its place and as the Israelites watched, they saw Pharaoh’s chariots, horses and soldiers disappear into the water. They shouted, “We’re free at last. God has fought for us and defeated our enemy! Praise be to our Lord!”

### III. ACTIVITY:

[Divide the class into 3 groups: 1. Israelites 2. Pharaoh’s army 3. The waves of the sea. Appoint someone to take the part of Moses and another to tell the story. Enact the story.]

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#### NEXT CLASS:

- How did God lead the Israelites after they left Egypt? *[By a pillar of cloud and fire.]*
- Where did he lead them? *[To the Red Sea.]*
- What made the people frightened? *[They saw Pharaoh’s army coming towards them. They were stuck between the sea and the army.]*
- What did Moses say to them? *[“Don’t be afraid. God will fight for us.”]*
- What happened the first time Moses stretched out his stick towards the sea? *[The sea parted and there was a dry path in between the waves.]*
- What happened when he stretched it out from the other side? *[The water came back and the Egyptian army was drowned.]*

At our last lesson we heard about John the Baptist. Do you know why people called him ‘the Baptist’? *[Because he used to stand in the river and baptise people.]* John used to say, “Be sorry for your sins! Come back to God!” Those who were really sorry would come to John and he would make them go down into the water and up again. (That is what baptise means: dipping into the water.)

One day, as John was baptising people, Jesus came to him and said, “Baptise me too!” John said, “No! I can’t do that! You should baptise me!” (He knew that Jesus was good and holy.) But Jesus said, “Do what I say. There is a reason for me to be baptised.”

Jesus went down into the water and up again. As he was coming up a bright shining dove came down from the sky and came onto him.. Just then a voice was heard from the sky, “This is my beloved Son. I am very happy with him!”

John realised that something very great was happening at that moment, but he didn’t understand it properly. But you may be able to tell us what was happening.

- What was that dove and whose voice was it? Why did Jesus go down into the water and up again? [Let the children offer their solutions, then bring out:]
  - The dove was a sign of the Holy Spirit.
  - And the voice was the voice of God the Father.
  - Jesus went into the water to show that he was going to die; and out again to show that he would rise from the dead and set us all free from our sins and from our enemy, the Devil.

[Give out the handouts. Read the written matter and fill in the blanks:]

PHARAOH, ARMY, RED SEA, MOSES, STICK, ISRAELITES, EGYPTIANS, FREE.

JOHN THE BAPTIST, DIE, RISE, FREE.

WATER, (student’s name), FATHER, SON, HOLY SPIRIT, SIN, DEVIL.

#### IV. REFLECTION & PRAYER:

- How did God set the Israelites free? [*By making a way through the sea.*]
- How did Jesus make us free? [*By dying on the cross and rising again.*] Was it easy for him? [*No!*]
- What did we have to do to become free? Did we have to die? [*No. We just had to be baptised and promise to follow Jesus.*]

Let's think about what Jesus did and like the Israelites let's thank and praise our great God.

[After a few minutes of silent prayer teach and sing the song:]

Jesus sets me absolutely free!

Died on Calvary to give me liberty!

Jesus sets me absolutely free! Praise his name!

That's enough to make me sing [2]

My sins are all forgiven and I'm on my way to heaven.

That's enough to make me [3] ...sing!

[Replace 'sing' with 'clap', 'jump']

<p><b>Home assignment:</b> Read handout at home. Find out and write the date of your Baptism.</p>
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