

Gods People Cross the Sea

Storyteller (spreads out the Desert Bag): This is the Desert Bag. So many wonderful and important things happen in the desert, we need to know what it is like. We can't get the whole desert into our church, so here is just a little piece of the desert.

Smoother the sand while you talks.

The desert is a dangerous place.

There is little water, and almost nothing grows there. It is hot in the daytime and cold at night.

Put the pyramid and the Pharoah figure in the desert box near you on the left.

Put the Moses and Miriam figures in the sand to the right of the pyramid.

Exodus 13:17-22

After the king had finally let the people go, the LORD did not lead them through Philistine territory, though that was the shortest way. God had said, "If they are attacked, they may decide to return to Egypt." So he led them around through the desert and toward the Reed Sea.

The Israelites left Egypt, prepared for battle.

Moses had them take along the bones of Joseph, whose dying words had been, "God will come to your rescue, and when he does, be sure to take along my bones."

The people of Israel left Succoth and camped at Etham at the border of Egypt near the desert. During the day the LORD went ahead of his people in a thick cloud, and during the night he went ahead of them in a flaming fire. That way the LORD could lead them at all times, whether day or night.

Exodus 14:5-31

When the king of Egypt heard that the Israelites had finally left, he and his officials changed their minds and said, "Look what we have done! We let them get away, and they will no longer be our slaves."

The king got his war chariot and army ready. He commanded his officers in charge of his six hundred best chariots and all his other chariots to start after the Israelites. The LORD made the king so stubborn that he went after them, even though the Israelites proudly went on their way. But the king's horses and chariots and soldiers caught up with them while they were camping by the Reed Sea near Pi-Hahiroth and Baal-Zephon.

When the Israelites saw the king coming with his army, they were frightened and

Story Materials

- Desert Bag
- Wooden blocks to represent the city
- Pyramid model
- "People of God" figures
- Moses Figure
- Pharoah figure
- blue felt "water"

Tray, basket or shallow open box to hold the story

When Pharoah let God's people go. God didn't lead them by the shortest route to the Promised Land. God led the people by the roundabout way of the Reed Sea desert. *Move the figures in a roundabout rout toward the middle of the desert near the children.* The Lord went in front of them as a column of cloud by day, and a column of fire by night. *Hold your hand upright in front of the figures.* When they came to the sea, they stopped there. *Lay down the two pieces of blue felt just the other side if the figures, across the desert, overlapping just slightly in the middle.*

Pharoah and his officials changed their minds about letting God's people go. So Pharoah took his army and chased God's

people. Pharoah and his army caught up with them where they were stopped by the sea. *Move the Pharoah figure toward the People of God.* The Israelites were terrified. They said "It would have been better to stay slaves in Egypt than to die in the desert.

But God said to Moses, "Lift your shepherd's rod, stretch out your hand over the sea, and split it in two so that the Israelites can cross the sea on dry ground." The column of cloud moved from the front and stood between Pharoah and God's people. *Hold your hand upright in front of the people, and move it slowly around to face Pharoah.* The cloud remained there, and when darkness fell it lit up

the night. Pharaoh's army stayed away from God's people all night.

begged the LORD for help. They also complained to Moses, "Wasn't there enough room in Egypt to bury us? Is that why you brought us out here to die in the desert? Why did you bring us out of Egypt anyway? While we were there, didn't we tell you to leave us alone? We had rather be slaves in Egypt than die in this desert!"

But Moses answered, "Don't be afraid! Be brave, and you will see the LORD save you today. These Egyptians will never bother you again. The LORD will fight for you, and you won't have to do a thing."

The LORD said to Moses, "Why do you keep calling out to me for help? Tell the Israelites to move forward. Then hold your walking stick over the sea. The water will open up and make a road where they can walk through on dry ground. I will make the Egyptians so stubborn that they will go after you. Then I will be praised because of what happens to the king and his chariots and cavalry. The Egyptians will know for sure that I am the LORD."

All this time God's angel had gone ahead of Israel's army, but now he moved behind them. A large cloud had also gone ahead of them, but now it moved between the Egyptians and the Israelites. The cloud gave light to the Israelites, but made it dark for the

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. God pushed the sea back by a strong wind all night, splitting the sea in two. *Fold back the felt about an inch on each side.* God's people walked through the sea on dry ground. *Move the People of God figures through one at a time.*

Pharaoh chased them into the sea. At daybreak the sea returned to its normal depth, and Pharaoh and his army were washed away. God rescued his people that day. God's people saw the amazing power of God and believed in God.

Egyptians, and during the night they could not come any closer.

Moses stretched his arm over the sea, and the LORD sent a strong east wind that blew all night until there was dry land where the water had been. The sea opened up, and the Israelites walked through on dry land with a wall of water on each side.

The Egyptian chariots and cavalry went after them. But before daylight the LORD looked down at the Egyptian army from the fiery cloud and made them panic. Their chariot wheels got stuck, and it was hard for them to move. So the Egyptians said to one another, "Let's leave these people alone! The LORD is on their side and is fighting against us."

The LORD told Moses, "Stretch your arm

toward the sea—the water will cover the Egyptians and their cavalry and chariots." Moses stretched out his arm, and at daybreak the water rushed toward the Egyptians. They tried to run away, but the LORD drowned them in the sea. The water came and covered the chariots, the cavalry, and the whole Egyptian army that had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not one of them was left alive. But the sea had made a wall of water on each side of the Israelites; so they walked through on dry land.

30 On that day, when the Israelites saw the bodies of the Egyptians washed up on the shore, they knew that the LORD had saved them. 31 Because of the mighty power he had used against the Egyptians, the Israelites worshiped him and trusted him and his servant Moses.