



VA 4A The Red Sea Crossing

Exodus 12:31–15:21

After the last plague, which was the death of the firstborn son, Pharaoh and the Egyptians urged the Hebrews to leave Egypt, sending them away with clothing and many things made of silver and gold. The Egyptians were very scared that the Hebrews' God would end up killing all of the Egyptians if the Hebrews were not allowed to leave.

To avoid any problems with the Philistines, a warlike people, God sent the Hebrews south toward the Red Sea. He led His people in two very special ways—by day, there was a pillar of cloud, and by night, there was a pillar of fire. The cloud and fire gave the Hebrews direction and light during their journey.

After the Hebrews left, Pharaoh's heart became hardened, and he regretted asking them to leave. He wanted the Hebrews back so that they could serve him. Pharaoh gathered his Egyptian army and decided to chase after the Hebrews to capture them. Pharaoh's army had 600 chariots! When the Hebrews made it to the Red Sea, they became trapped. Rocky areas were on either side of them; the Red Sea was in front of them; and the Egyptian army was behind them. What were they going to do?

The Hebrew people were very afraid and cried out to God. Moses said to them, "Don't be afraid. Be still. The Lord will fight for you!" The pillar of cloud that was

leading the Hebrews moved and went behind them. The Hebrews and the Egyptians were separated. The cloud provided light to the Hebrews and was a curtain of darkness to the Egyptians. Neither group approached each other that night. God directed Moses to lift up his walking stick, or rod, and hold it over the Red Sea. God caused a very strong wind to blow over the sea and made a dry pathway through the sea. The Hebrews were able to walk all the way across the dry land with the sea on both sides!

In the morning, as the Egyptians chased the Hebrews into the Red Sea, God made the wheels of their chariots fall off. This made it very difficult to drive! God wanted to confuse the Egyptian army. He told Moses to stretch out his hand over the Red Sea, and the waters returned. When Moses did this, the chariots, horsemen, and Pharaoh's army were destroyed.

In response to God's power, the Hebrews trusted in God and believed in His servant Moses. When they saw that they were saved, Moses and the Hebrews sang praises to God. Miriam, Moses' sister, led the women in singing praises to God. The Hebrews praised God because He did what they could not do—He provided a way of escape from and victory over the Egyptians.