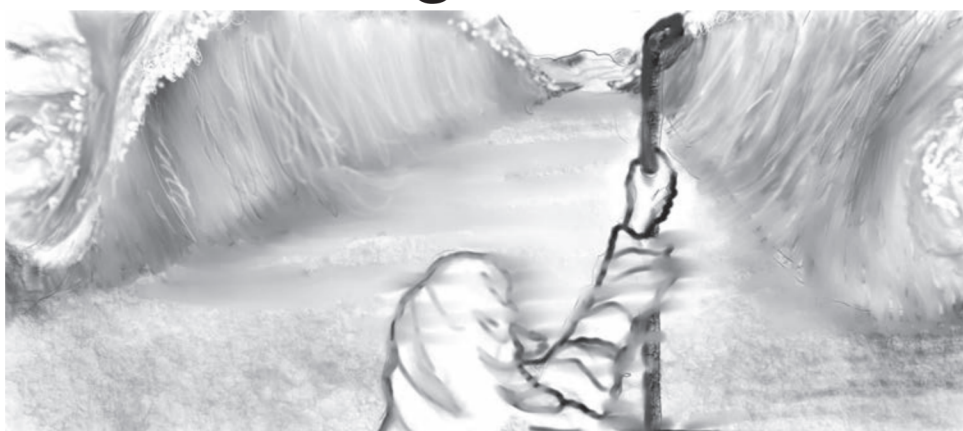


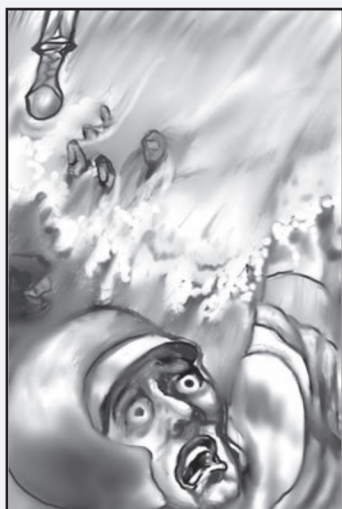
# Crossing the Red Sea



## SABBATH—AUGUST 2

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON:** Exodus 12:31–36; Exodus 13:1–16; Exodus 13:17–14:12; Exodus 14:13–31; Exodus 15:1–21.

**MEMORY VERSE:** “Moses answered the people. He said, ‘Don’t be afraid. Stand firm. You will see how the LORD will save you today. Do you see those Egyptians? You will never see them again. The LORD will fight for you. Just be still’ ” (Exodus 14:13, 14, NIV).



**This experience also is the most perfect example of how God beat the enemies of His people, the Israelites, and then brought them into the Promised Land.**

**THE EXODUS** is the time when God helped the Israelites escape from slavery in Egypt. The Exodus is the most powerful experience of God's people in the Old Testament. This experience also is the most perfect example of how God beat the enemies of His people, the Israelites, and then brought them into the Promised Land. The Exodus shows us how God saves us in Jesus, too.

The Israelites were in terrible trouble. They could not escape from slavery on their own. They needed God's help. We also need God's help. We can't escape from sin. Without God's help, we are hopeless slaves. We need something more powerful than the Exodus. We need the Cross.

Exodus 12–15 are exciting chapters. In them, we read about how Israel leaves the land of Goshen. We also read about the song of Moses. The things that happen in these chapters are amazing. We see some of God's most powerful miracles and signs.

The Exodus can't compare with what Jesus did for us at the cross. But the Exodus can help us understand better all the wonderful things that God did for us in Jesus.

**GO, AND WORSHIP THE LORD (Exodus 12:31–36)**

On the night of Passover, God's final punishment fell on the people who weren't protected with the blood (Exodus 12:12). As we saw already, Passover was the time when God killed in one night the sons who were born first to the Egyptians and saved His people from this punishment. None of the Egyptians escaped because of their education, riches, fame, or job. God's punishment struck all Egyptian families, from Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, to Egyptians who were slaves. God also punished the animals who were born first. God destroyed the pride of the Egyptians.

**Pharaoh finally gives permission for all the Israelites to leave. What does Pharaoh ask Moses to do? Why was the thing Pharaoh asked for so strange? Read Exodus 12:31–36 for the answer.**

When Pharaoh tells the Hebrews to go and worship, he adds, “ ‘And also bless me’ ” (Exodus 12:32, ICB).

And also bless me?

Why does the king of Egypt, who is a “god” on this earth among his people, ask for Moses to bless him? Is Pharaoh finally accepting that God is all-powerful? But how can God bless Pharaoh when he is filled with pride, sin, and wants to fight against Him? Sure, Pharaoh finally gave the Hebrews permission to leave. But Pharaoh didn't agree to let them go because he had a change of heart and finally gave his life to the Lord. Pharaoh let the Hebrews go because he felt defeated. But he wasn't sorry for his sins, as we will later see. Pharaoh just wanted the punishments to stop destroying his kingdom.

Pharaoh felt ashamed. The worst punishment killed all the sons of Egypt who were born first. So, Pharaoh gives permission for Israel to leave Egypt.

“The Egyptians begged [asked] the people of Israel to hurry up and leave the country. ‘If you don't,’ they said, ‘we'll all die!’ ” (Exodus 12:33, NIV).

In the meantime, God made sure that the Israelites didn't leave Egypt empty-handed. The Egyptians gave the Hebrews the things they needed because they wanted to get rid of God's people. But the things the Egyptians gave the Israelites were really a paycheck for hundreds of years of work that God's people did for free as slaves.



**The things the Egyptians gave the Israelites were really a paycheck for hundreds of years of work that God's people did for free as slaves.**

## THE SONS BORN FIRST BELONG TO GOD (Exodus 13:1–16)

God promised to save the Israelites. So, His people needed to be ready. They must believe God would save them. They also needed to act on their beliefs. God told them what they needed to do. With faith, they now needed to do it. James's words about faith and actions fit very well here: if faith "doesn't cause us to do something, it's dead" (James 2:17, NIV; also read verses 18–20).



**God saved the Israelites' sons who were born first because they were protected with the blood.**

**God saved the Israelite sons who were born first and did not kill them during the final punishment. Read the command in Exodus 13:1–16. Why did God give His people this command? What should this command mean to us today?**

God in His mercy protected the Israelite families who were under the blood. With faith, these families marked their doorframes. Now God gave Moses new information about what He wanted His people to do: " 'You must give me every male in Israel who is his mother's first child' " (Exodus 13:2, ERV). This law was for both people and animals.

Everything belongs to God because He made us. So, God owns everything: "The earth and everything on it belong to the LORD. The world [planet] and all its people belong to him" (Psalm 24:1, ERV). " 'The silver is mine, and the gold is mine,' says the Lord of heaven's armies" (Haggai 2:8, ICB). The Israelites' sons who were born first were the first blessing that God gave to His people. These sons were a symbol that the Israelites gave their hearts and lives fully to God. These sons also were a sign that the people understood that everything they owned came from God.

In this special command about the sons who were born first, we also see the idea of God's saving mercy. God saved the Israelites' sons who were born first because they were protected with the blood. So, God saved them from death. In the same way, God will save everyone who is under the blood of Jesus. As Paul writes about Jesus, "The Son paid the price to make us free. In him we have forgiveness of our sins" (Colossians 1:14, ERV).

In the meantime, God gave Moses rules about how the sons should be offered to Him. This offering was part of Israel's celebration. They celebrated how God saved them from slavery. The people must kill the animals, but God in His mercy saved their sons (Exodus 13:12, 13, 15).



**CROSSING THE RED SEA (Exodus 13:17—14:12)**

**Read the story in Exodus 13:17–14:12. How did God lead the Israelites when they left Egypt? What happened next?**

God told Moses what He wanted the people to do before they left Egypt. So, when the Israelites finally left, they looked the same as an army (Exodus 6:26; Exodus 7:4; Exodus 12:17, 41, 51; Exodus 14:19, 20; compare with Exodus 13:18). Moses divided the Israelites into groups. Then the Israelites marched the same as an army. Later, when Balaam stood on the hills of Moab, he “saw the Israelites camped in their tribes [family groups]” (Numbers 24:2, ICB).

Moses also took the bones of Joseph with him (Exodus 13:19). This information is very important because it shows us Joseph’s faith in God’s promises. Yes, Joseph lived in Egypt with all of its riches. But Joseph never stopped believing God’s promises. Joseph believed that the Lord would remember Israel and lead them to the Promised Land. So, Joseph told the Israelites to carry his bones to Canaan when they left Egypt. When Israel arrived in Canaan, Joseph’s bones were buried at Shechem (Joshua 24:32).

God was with His people in a tall cloud during the day and in a cloud of fire at night. The Israelites could see the tall cloud during the day and the cloud of fire at night and know that God was with them. The Lord lived in the tall cloud and the cloud of fire. He talked with His people from the tall cloud (Exodus 14:24; Numbers 12:5, 6).

In the meantime, Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, shows what is really in his heart. He has not changed. He isn’t sorry for his sins. Pharaoh and his army go after their escaped slaves. Pharaoh could not see his own sin.

When the Israelites saw Pharaoh’s army coming, they blamed Moses for trying to kill them. “They said to Moses, ‘What have you done to us? Why did you bring us out of Egypt to die in the desert? There were plenty of graves for us in Egypt’ ” (Exodus 14:11, ICB). The people saw God do many miracles for them. God saved their sons who were born first. God saved them when He punished the Egyptians with death. But the Israelites continued not to trust God.

**When was the last time you were in deep trouble? Did you trust in God? Or did you doubt Him? What lessons did you learn from that time that can help you the next time trouble comes? (And it will come.)**



**God was with His people in a tall cloud during the day and in a cloud of fire at night.**



## MARCHING FORWARD WITH FAITH (Exodus 14:13–31)

**Read Exodus 14:13–31.** The Israelites didn't have much faith in God. What did God do for His people anyway?

Moses trusted God and His promises. So, Moses encouraged the people to trust Him, too. Moses tells the people to do four things. These four things are important lessons for us to remember during hard times:

1. “**‘Don’t be afraid!’**” (Exodus 14:13, ERV). We must trust the Lord because our trust in Him is the only way we can stop being afraid. Isaiah tells us this same thing. God will act for us when we accept Him as our God and Lord (Isaiah 41:10, 13).
2. “**‘Stand still’**” (Exodus 14:13, ICB). While “stand still” means that you stop complaining and expect God to do wonderful things for you, the words also mean something much more. “Stand still” also means we must trust in God and be patient. We must wait for Him to help us, because He will act.
3. “**‘Watch the Lord save you today’**” (Exodus 14:13, ERV). Our faith must grow. To help it grow, we must accept God’s leadership and His help. We also must be thankful for His promise of help. To “watch” means to have faith (when we don’t believe, we are “blind.”) Only God can help us win. Only He can keep us safe and save us. God always is for us. He cares and gives us what we need at the right time.
4. **Know that “‘the Lord will fight for you’**” (Exodus 14:14, ICB). This verse tells us what God will do. He will personally fight for His people. Later, the Egyptians saw this Bible truth when the Lord fought against them for His people (Exodus 14:25). The cross at Calvary also shows us that God will fight for us. On the cross, Jesus won the fight against Satan so that He could give us everlasting life (John 5:24; Hebrews 2:14; Revelation 12:10, 11).



The cross at Calvary also shows us that God will fight for us.

God commanded Moses to go forward. God showed Israel His battle plan: (1) The cloud moved behind the people to protect them. (2) Moses stretched His hand over the sea. (3) The Lord separated the water and dried it up with a strong wind. (4) The Israelites walked across the dry ground to the other side. (5) The Egyptians chased them and drowned. They didn't understand that God was doing big things for His people until it was too late (Exodus 14:25).

**THE SONG OF MOSES AND MIRIAM (Exodus 15:1–21)**

God destroyed the whole Egyptian army. No one was left alive, including Pharaoh, king of Egypt (read Psalm 136:15). The Egyptians lost the fight completely. God's people won completely. No wonder the Jews tell this story to this day.

**What is Moses' song about? Read Exodus 15:1–21 for the answer.**

This song praises the Lord because He is a mighty warrior. The Lord destroyed the Egyptians because they fought against His people. Moses says that the Lord, his God, is also his strength and song. The Lord saves him. No one is as powerful or wonderful as God. Moses sings, “ ‘You are majestic and holy. Your glory fills me with wonder. You do amazing things’ ” (Exodus 15:11, NIV).

Moses' song is all about God. Moses sings about who God is and what He does. Moses praises God for saving His people. When God is good to us, we want to worship and thank Him. When we are thankful for God's love, we will have a strong spiritual life. Moses sings about God's love because God will lead the people He saved. God will guide them to the place where He will live with them. Moses says that God will build His temple on His own mountain (Exodus 15:17). In the future, God will command the Israelites to build His temple in Jerusalem.

In Revelation 15:2–4, the saved people sing the song of Moses and the song of Jesus, the Lamb. Can you imagine in your mind how beautiful this song will be in heaven?! God's people will praise God for the wonderful and mighty things He did for them. We will praise God for His fair actions. We will praise Him for His holy acts and His holy life.

Notice the last line of the song: “ ‘All people will come and worship before you, because it is clear that you do what is right’ ” (Revelation 15:4, ERV). At that time, everyone will see and understand everything that God did to judge and punish evil on this earth. Then all people will praise God for His work as Judge.

**Thinker Immanuel Kant said that if God is fair, then there must be a heaven or afterlife. Why is this idea so true? How can we learn to trust that God will punish all the evil on this earth? How does this idea give you hope?**



**In Revelation 15:2-4, the saved people sing the song of Moses and the song of Jesus, the Lamb.**

**ADDITIONAL THOUGHT:** Read Ellen G. White, “The Exodus,” pages 281–290, in *Patriarchs and Prophets*.

God chose a route to the Promised Land that would cause less trouble for His people along the way. “The Israelites didn’t know much about God. They had very little faith in Him. They so easily became afraid and lost hope. They didn’t have weapons and didn’t know how to fight. Their hearts were very sad from long years of slavery. The Israelites had women and children, flocks, and herds to take care of. So, the Lord led them along the Red Sea route to show His people that He was both loving and wise.”—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 282, adapted.

The *Andrews Bible Commentary* talks about the Song of Moses: “God saved His people. This saving act teaches us that we don’t need to be afraid about the future. The last part of the Song of Moses talks about the future enemies of Israel. Israel would fight them to win the land of Canaan. God would fight for His people and cause their enemies to be filled with fear (Exodus 15:16). When we feel afraid and don’t know what to do, we can remember ‘The Song of Moses.’ This song fills us with hope because it helps us remember a powerful time when God saved His people.”—*Andrews Bible Commentary*, “Exodus” (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2020), page 214, adapted.



“When we feel afraid and don’t know what to do, we can remember ‘The Song of Moses.’”

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① We have much proof of God’s love and power. So, why do we continue to show so little faith in Him during hard times?
- ② Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, chased the Israelites after they left Egypt. Why would Pharaoh go after them after everything bad that happened to Egypt? What should Pharaoh’s stubborn heart tell us about the danger we will be in if we let sin make our hearts hard?
- ③ For sure, we all have hard times. At the same time, many of us have very good days. We have some very good times when nothing bad happens to us or to our loved ones. Why should we see these times as proof of God’s mercy and protection? Why should we always remember to praise God in the good times, because we don’t know what bad things God is saving us from?



## SHARING GOD IN A HOSPITAL

**D**mitry Bagal was a Russian Bible worker. Dmitry lived in Germany. Dmitry got sick and went to the hospital. While he was there, he saw different types of people. Many people in the hospital were not Christians. Some people there didn't believe in Christianity or belonged to other religions. Many of these people had questions about God.

A patient who was sick went to the hospital for an operation. But six weeks later, his disease came back. The doctor didn't think there was any hope for the man. So, he didn't operate again. The man couldn't think clearly. He hardly knew who his wife was. The woman wanted to stay with her husband in the hospital during his last days of life. Dmitry gave the woman a book about God and suffering. Then Dmitry prayed with the couple. The prayer moved the wife to tears.

Later that day, Dmitry gave the woman copies of *The Great Controversy* and *The Desire of Ages*. Dmitry told her that the book gave hope to him and many other people. She wanted the books, but not for free. She gave Dmitry 14 euros (that is \$15.00 dollars in US money). That was how much money the woman had in her purse. Dmitry believes he will meet this woman again. If not on the earth, then on the new earth!

Dmitry also met a young man in the hospital. None of the doctors knew what was wrong with him. The young man was from Iran. The young man dropped out of school in Britain and flew to Germany to be healed. The doctors couldn't figure out what was wrong with him. The young man couldn't walk. So, Dmitry pushed him around the hospital yard in a wheelchair nearly every day. The young man wasn't a Christian. But he let Dmitry pray to Jesus for him. As Dmitry prayed day after day, the young man started to get better. Before long, he could stand and walk with some help. Dmitry and the young man talked in German. But because the young man studied in Britain, Dmitry gave him an English language copy of *The Great Controversy*. Months later, Dmitry continued to pray for the young man. These words gave Dmitry hope to keep praying: "But remember, you don't know how your efforts will change the lives of people for the better."—Ellen G. White, *Colporteur Ministry*, page 114, adapted.

During two weeks in the hospital, Dmitry gave away 20 copies of *The Great Controversy* and other books. He also gave many people business cards with QR codes so that they could download the book. Dmitry also filled ten of the hospital's public bookshelves with religious books.

Dmitry says, "I planted many 'seeds' in people's hearts. I pray these seeds will grow. We work under God's leadership. He is in control. We must trust Him to bless our efforts."

INSIDE  
*Story*  
by ANDREW MCCHESENEY



**So, Dmitry pushed him around the hospital yard in a wheelchair nearly every day.**



**Dmitry Bagal**