

## **THE CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY CHILDREN'S MEETING LESSON**

**DATE:** November 16, 2014

**SUBJECT: THE TRAVELS OF THE CHOSEN CHILDREN OF ISRAEL: Crossing the Red Sea**

**SCRIPTURE:** Exodus 13:17-22; 14:1-31; 15:1-21

**AIM:** To see that God is always on our side and we do not need to be afraid when we have difficulties and problems.

**MEMORY VERSES TO CHOOSE FROM:** Psalm 86:6-7 (Give ear, O Jehovah, to my prayer, And give heed to the voice of my supplications. In the day of my distress I call upon You, For You answer me.); Psalm 50:15 (And call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver you, and you will glorify Me.)

**SUGGESTED SONGS:** #45 (How Did Moses Cross the Red Sea?); #8302 (Bible Story Songs Moses Vol. 2 - The Israelites are Finally Free); #8303 (BSS Moses Vol. 2 - Follow, Follow, Following the Pillar); #8322 (BSS Moses Vol. 2 - The Red Sea Moses Parted); #8308 (BSS Moses Vol. 2 - Do All Things Without Murmuring); #5 (Grumblers); #24 (He's Able)

**BACKGROUND/REVIEW:** Last week we saw that the children of Israel left Egypt and began their journey to the good land, traveling from Rameses to a region called Succoth; there were about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides children (Exodus 12:37). Now they began to travel again on their way to the good land.

*(Note to serving ones:* For this lesson, it may be helpful to bring a map to show where the children of Israel went, and to show how they were "trapped" when they came to the Red Sea.)

### **CONTENT:**

When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near. God thought that perhaps the people would change their minds when they saw war and return to Egypt. So God led the people around by the way of the wilderness to the Red Sea. They journeyed from Succoth and encamped in Etham on the edge of the wilderness. Jehovah went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them on the way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might go by day and by night. The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night were always with the people.

Then Jehovah told Moses to tell the children of Israel to turn back and camp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea. Pharaoh would say that the children of Israel were wandering aimlessly in the land and that the wilderness had hemmed them in (trapped them). Jehovah would harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue after them. When it was told to the king of Egypt that the people had fled, the heart of Pharaoh and his servants changed toward the people; and they said, "What is this we have done, letting Israel go from serving us?" So he yoked his chariot and took his people with him and he took six hundred chosen chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them. And Jehovah hardened the heart of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, so that he pursued after the children of Israel. And the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh and his horsemen and his army; and they overtook them as they encamped by the sea, beside Pi-hahiroth, before Baal- zephon.

When Pharaoh approached, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them! So they became very afraid. The children of Israel cried out to Jehovah. Then they started blaming Moses for bringing them out of Egypt. They complained, "Is it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you done this to us, bringing us out of Egypt?" They even said that "it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." But Moses told the people, "Do not be afraid; stand firm, and see the salvation of Jehovah..." Jehovah would fight for them! Jehovah then told Moses to tell the children of Israel to move forward. Moses was to lift up his staff, and stretch out his hand over the sea, and divide it. The children of Israel should go into the midst of the sea on dry ground. Jehovah would harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they would chase the Israelites.

Then the Angel of God moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. The cloud was there with the darkness, yet it gave light by night to them. So one camp did not come near the other camp all night. And when Moses stretched out his

hand over the sea, Jehovah caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all the night and made the sea dry land; and the waters were divided.

And the children of Israel crossed the sea on dry ground! The waters were on their left and right like walls. The Egyptians chased them - all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and horsemen chased them into the midst of the sea. In the morning, Jehovah looked down upon the camp of the Egyptians from within the pillar of fire and of cloud and threw the camp of the Egyptians into confusion. And He caused their chariot wheels to swerve and made them drive with difficulty, so that the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from Israel, for Jehovah is fighting for them against the Egyptians."

Then Jehovah told Moses to stretch out his hand over the sea so that the waters would come back over the Egyptians, over their chariots and over their horsemen. So that's what Moses did. He stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its level in the morning. And the Egyptians fled against it, and Jehovah overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And as the waters returned, they covered the chariots and the horsemen, even all the army of Pharaoh that went in after them into the sea; not even one of them was left. But the children of Israel walked on dry land through the midst of the sea, and the waters were a wall to them on their left and right.

And when the children of Israel saw Jehovah's great power, they feared Jehovah and believed in Him and in His servant Moses.

Then Moses and the children of Israel sang a song to Jehovah. It was a wonderful song, full of praises and thanksgiving to the Lord for saving them from the Egyptians. And Miriam, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing. And Miriam responded to them, "Sing to Jehovah, for He has triumphed gloriously; the horse and its rider He has cast into the sea." What a wonderful celebration!

#### **SUGGESTED APPLICATIONS TO CHOOSE FROM:**

- **When we have a problem, we should pray instead of complain.** After leaving Egypt, the children of Israel were surrounded: The sea was before them, the powerful Egyptian army was behind them chasing them, and the mountains were at their sides. There was absolutely no chance of escape. Initially, they cried out to the Lord but eventually they responded by complaining bitterly to Moses and blaming him for their predicament (difficult or dangerous situation). They even said "it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." (Exodus 14:12b) What a terrible thing to say, after they had complained being under cruel slavery and the Lord saved them! They should have prayed instead of complained. But even still, the Lord graciously and powerfully delivered them in a very marvelous way. They most probably could never have thought that He would divide the sea for them. But He was able to bring them through.
- **We do not need to be afraid because God is with us.** At times, we may feel very afraid. For some children, it may be being afraid of the dark, something that they saw, or something bad that happened. We can tell the Lord that we are afraid. We have the God of the universe with us, and we do not need to be scared!
- **We should have a thankful heart.** Sometimes we forget what the Lord has done for us, in giving us our parents/grandparents, our home, our toys, our friends, in keeping us safe, etc. The children of Israel saw God do amazing things such as sending the ten plagues that eventually convinced Pharaoh to let them go. Yet when they got into a bad situation again, they started complaining and seemed to forget that the Lord was able to do great things. After crossing the Red Sea, however, the children of Israel did praise the Lord by singing. Moses and the children of Israel sang a song to Jehovah and praised Him. Miriam also sang to Jehovah. When the Lord answers our prayer, we should remember to thank and praise Him. When our parents or other people do something for us, we should remember to say, "thank you!"

Adapted from *Bringing Children from Adam to Christ in God's Economy*--Vol. 4, *The Travels of the Chosen Children of Israel*, Lesson 2, and from the Church in New York City's Children's meeting lessons: 6/12/88; 11/5/95; 11/9/03; 11/15/09

Reference: Complete Works of Flavius Josephus. Translated by William Whiston.