

THE CARETAKER

CONCEPT

God provides for His people as He works out His redemptive plan through them.

GOAL

Christian students will learn that God continued to love and guide the Israelites. Not because they deserved it but because His love is unconditional and He had made a covenant with them.

Non-Christian students will learn that those who are in Christ are part of God's family and part of His redemptive plan.

PASSAGE: EXODUS 14-18

Key Verse: "You provided bread from heaven for them for their hunger, You brought water from a rock for them for their thirst..." Nehemiah 9:15

PLANNING AHEAD*

Lesson Supplies

Introduction:

- "Follow that Pillar" Questions, 3 copies /class
- "Follow that Pillar" Clues, 1 set laminated
- Plastic grocery bag
- Bibles
- Suckers, 1/student

Craft Supplies

Activity Stations:

- Glue sticks
- Coriander seeds
- Small plastic tray
- "God's Travel Plans" map, 1/student
- Cinnamon imperials ("red hots"), several/student

* **Teachers please note:** For clarity, the shaded areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag. **Items followed by an asterisk* are to be supplied by the teaching team.**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION /TEACHER HELPS

"Pharaoh pursued the Israelites with his chariots and found them trapped, with their backs to the Red Sea. There was no human way to escape. It was useless to run before the chariots of Egypt. It was also useless to fight because they were an unarmed slave force of men, women, and children. Miraculously, God opened up a pathway through the midst of the Red Sea and commanded His People to march forward on dry ground to the other side. When the Hebrew people were safely across, the returning waters destroyed Pharaoh and his army.

This miracle of escape is used to demonstrate God's Power and concern for His People but it also discloses how people either rely on, or fail to rely on, God's Power. Moses knew God personally and believed in His Power. The people, however, failed to trust God. They looked at the enemy and their circumstances and, not trusting God, blamed Moses for their predicament. Moses, on the other hand, trusted God and knew that He would keep His promise to bring them out of Egypt. How often we react to our circumstances as though they were in control rather than Almighty God. Moses told the people to stand and watch how wonderfully the Lord would rescue them. God did just that.

The Wilderness Trip

God led His People out of the most powerful kingdom on earth and into the wilderness on one of the longest and most unusual trips ever to occur. This trip resulted in God revealing to His People many truths about Himself and about His ways for their lives.

God's Provisions. God provided for His People in many special ways that show His recognition of both spiritual and physical needs. In one of these, God led the people through the wilderness with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. The pillar was a cover to keep them cool by day and to give warmth and light during the cold desert nights (see Psalms 105:39). Even more important, this cloud, which was called the Shekinah glory, was visible evidence of God's Presence with them. The Shekinah glory was with the people, guiding them, protecting them, and progressively teaching them about God and His Holiness, as we will see.

God provided for every physical need of His People as well as their spiritual needs. He sent them bread from heaven in a daily supply called manna. The Lord reminded them that just as He supplied their physical need for bread, so He supplies the Bread of Life by giving us His Word, which we need to read and obey (see Deuteronomy 8:3; Matthew 4:4; John 6).

The wilderness wanderings picture in many ways our spiritual pilgrimage, from the world system and its enslavement, into God's Kingdom. We are brought out of our enslavement to sin by the *Power* of God. The pilgrimage to God's Rest (the Promised Land) may be long or short, depending on whether or not we follow the "cloud" of God's leading."¹

"In the three movements of the journey from Egypt to Sinai, *to*, *through*, and *from* the Red Sea, there are nine stages, and the events of this journey, which occupied about two months, should be noted, because they show, as does all Old Testament history, the weakness and sin of man, on the one hand; and the strength and grace of God, on the other hand.

The shame of this part of the story is the incorrigible unbelief and discontent of the Israelites; and the glory of it is the faithfulness and patience of the Lord."²

As you prepare for this lesson, consider the strength, grace, faithfulness and patience of the Lord in your life. Do you trust and depend on His sovereignty and love in the midst of your circumstances or do you choose to focus on your circumstances and miss the miracles God performs as He walks through them with you?

¹ Martha McCallum, Jane Hamblin, *God's Incredible Plan*, pp. 43, 44.

² W. Graham Scroggie, *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption*, © by W. Graham Scroggie, published 1994 by Kregel Publications, p. 158.

LESSON PLAN

SET UP	<p>Instructions: For the Introduction, one teacher will cut apart, fold and put the "Follow the Pillar" Questions at the locations indicated by the clues. Keep your "Follow the Pillar" Clues with you to give the students as they correctly answer the questions. Put the suckers in the grocery bag and hide them in the room wherever you want.</p>
INCORPORATION 15-20 MIN	<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research – God's Travel Plans Map Instructions: Give each student a "God's Travel Plans" map. Follow instructions on the map. • Demonstration – Manna Instructions: Discuss with the students that while the Israelites were in the wilderness God provided everything for them. They were in the desert so there was no water, but God made water come out of rocks. The food was called Manna. It was very fine flakes and tasted like coriander seeds. • Music: Suggested songs, "Jehovah Jireh," "Behold God is My Salvation," "Sing to the Lord" (words and chords attached). • Missions Prayer Instructions: Talk about and pray for Oasis Giving campaign and adopted missionary child.
INTRODUCTION -- LG GROUP 10 MIN	<p>Game – "Follow that Pillar"</p> <p>Instructions: Divide students into teams with a teacher in each team. Hand each team question #1 and a Bible. They must read the Bible passage and correctly answer the question before the teacher gives them the clue to the next location. The teams follow the five clues to the reward at the end. The clues are numbered differently so the groups should not be at the same locations, at least starting out. NOTE: Make sure your group leaves the questions for the groups that follow. Take your copy of the questions in case one is missing.</p> <p>Last week we learned about the plagues that God caused in Egypt. Why did He cause the plagues? (He caused the plagues to show that He is God and to force Pharaoh to let the Israelites go.) The last plague was called the Passover. Why? (God's judgment <u>passed over</u> the houses that had blood on the top and sides of the doorposts. No one was killed.) Finally Pharaoh let the Israelites go. They were free from slavery but they didn't know where they were going. So God directed them with a pillar of cloud by day and fire at night. We're going to play "Follow that Pillar" now to get a feel for being led to a place unknown. In order to get each clue, your team must correctly answer the questions. Everyone get into teams and we will begin.</p> <p>Question #1: Read Exodus 13:21,22. How did God guide the Israelites out of Egypt? (He used a pillar of cloud in day and fire at night.)</p> <p>Clue #1: Read the clue for your group.</p> <p>Question #2: Read Exodus 14:19,20. Why did the cloud move behind the Israelites? (It was between them and the Egyptians to separate them.)</p> <p>Clue #2: Read the clue for your group.</p> <p>Question #3: Read Psalms 105:39. Besides guiding the Israelites, what was the purpose of the pillar of cloud and pillar of fire? (They were covered during the day and light at night.)</p> <p>Clue #3: Read the clue for your group.</p> <p>Question #4: Read Exodus 40:36,37. How did the Israelites know when to move? (The cloud lifted and moved.)</p> <p>Clue #4: Read the clue for your group.</p>

	<p>Question #5: Read Nehemiah 9:15 (key verse for today). Besides guidance through the pillar of cloud and fire, what else did God provide for the Israelites? (He provided water and food.)</p> <p>Clue #5: Go back to your classroom and look <<wherever you put the suckers>>.</p> <p>Debrief: God led the Israelites out of Egypt, guiding them with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire at night. They were on their way to freedom when they found themselves cornered. The Egyptians were chasing them and up ahead was the Red Sea. They were trapped, or so they thought. But God had a plan and provided everything they needed to get away.</p>
<p>TRANSITION – 2 MIN</p>	<p>The Drama Team will present a skit to show what happened when the Israelites got to the Red Sea.</p>
<p>LEARNING ACTIVITY #1 – LG GROUP 10 MIN</p>	<p>DRAMA - "On the Waterfront" skit performed by the Drama Team</p>
<p>TRANSITION – 2 MIN</p>	<p>Let's go back to our classrooms. Grab a Bible, sit down and we'll read the rest of the story.</p>
<p>LESSON LG GROUP 10 MIN</p>	<p>God led the Hebrews with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire at night. Do you know how else He provided for them? A desert environment cannot support human life. It has little water and, therefore, almost no natural vegetation. Naturally, the Hebrews wondered how they would survive without water or food on the journey to the Promised Land. Can you imagine what it would be like?! Over a million people in the desert, no food, no water, no stores and you don't know where you're going. You would be completely dependent on God just to survive. Did the Israelites have any reason to believe God would provide for them? (Yes, Passover, Red Sea.) The people of Israel experienced God's miracles over and over. They saw Him cause plagues to force Pharaoh to let His people go. And they walked <u>through</u> the Red Sea on <u>dry</u> ground. So wouldn't you think these people would believe that God would take care of them from here on out?</p> <p>Let's read Exodus 15:22-27. Even though God had provided for them to this point, they complained when things weren't the way they wanted them to be. But God provided sweet water for them at Marah anyway and then commanded them to obey Him. If they obeyed, God would not bring the diseases upon them that He put on the Egyptians.</p> <p>Let's keep reading. Exodus 16:4-15. God said He would "rain bread from heaven." This rain of bread was called manna. According to verse 14, what did manna look like? (It was fine, flake-like—as fine as frost on the ground.)</p> <p>In Exodus 17:1-7 we read that the people complain again. Moses must have been very frustrated with the people. And how about God? He had led them safely out of Egypt, performing one miracle after another. Not one person was killed or even hurt. They saw Him produce food from heaven and water from a rock, but they continued to whine, complain and refuse to trust Him. If you read further in Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, you will read that the Hebrews never got sick during the 40 years they were in the wilderness. They had no colds, no flu, no tummy aches! Their clothes and shoes never wore out, either. Our key verse today is, "You provided bread from heaven for them for their hunger, You brought water from a rock for them for their thirst..." (Nehemiah 9:15).</p> <p>Why did God provide all this for them? (He provided so the nation would survive the trip through the desert.) If you were God, what would you do with such faithless people? (Allow students to comment.) It's a good thing God is not like us. God is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth. He continued to love and guide His people. Not because they deserved it but because His love is unconditional and He had made a covenant with them. What was the covenant? (It was the Abrahamic Covenant.) God promised that Abraham's descendants would be as many as the stars in the sky, that they would become a nation, He</p>

	<p>would give them land and through them all the nations of the world would be blessed. At this point in history, this family had grown from one man, Abraham, to over 1 million people. They had become the nation of Israel. And now they were on their way to the Promised Land. We are very privileged because we know they made it to the Promised Land. We also know how God blessed the world through this nation. Who can tell me how God blessed the world through this nation? (Jesus was an Israelite. He came to die for the sins of the whole world.) God chose these Hebrew people to be those through whom the promised Messiah would come to bless the whole world.</p> <p>The time of Moses was thousands of years ago. As I said, God provided everything the Israelites needed to survive in the desert so they could get to the Promised Land. And He promised that through this people He would bless the whole world. Jesus came to die on the cross to pay for our sin. We can receive His forgiveness by admitting to God that we sin and asking His forgiveness through Jesus' death. The minute we ask, He forgives us for <u>all</u> our sins—past, present and future. We are not only forgiven, but also become His chosen people. That was God's plan from the beginning of time—for thousands of years He has continued to work it out. His people today are just as much a part of that plan as the Israelites in Moses' day.</p>
TRANSITION – 2 MIN	Let's get into small groups to talk about what this has to do with us and to pray.
<p>LEARNING ACTIVITY #2 – SM GROUPS 10 MIN Rationale: to apply scripture to real life.</p>	<p>Our key verse is, "You provided bread from heaven for them for their hunger, You brought water from a rock for them for their thirst..." (Nehemiah 9:15). Isn't it amazing that His people continued to complain and disobey when God had provided so much and performed so many miracles for them? It's easy to look at the Israelites and think they are so foolish, but isn't it true that we are very much like them?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you ever been mad and complained to your parents because you didn't think you got what you deserved or thought you needed? Do you have everything you need? Why do you usually complain? • Do you ever thank your parents or God? My complaints are usually just like the Israelites because I'm not grateful for what I have—not because I don't have what I need. Just as God provided everything that His people needed back then, He does today. He doesn't rain manna or bring water out of rocks. What does He give us? (He gives us everything we need to live—our parents, food, clothes, even things to enjoy.) • Do you ever have trouble believing that God will always give you everything you need? What do you do when you start to wonder where God is? • What's the most important thing God gives us? (He gives Himself, the opportunity to be forgiven and become His chosen people) <p>Let's pray now and thank God that He knows and provides exactly what we need. Let's ask Him to show us how He provides for us every day. If you are not His child, you can ask Him to forgive your sins through Jesus' death for you.</p>

"Jehovah Jireh"

Am Dm
 Jehovah Jireh, My Provider
F G Am
 Your Grace is sufficient for me
Em
 For me, for me

Am Dm
 Jehovah Jireh, My Provider
F G Am
 Your Grace is sufficient for me

Am D
 My God shall supply all your needs
F Am
 According to His riches in glory
C Dm
 He will give His angels charge over thee

F G Am
 Jehovah Jireh careth for me
Em
 For me, for me
F G Am
 Jehovah Jireh careth for me.

Behold, God is My Salvation (Isaiah 12:2)

Am G Am
 Behold, God is my salvation,
G Am - A
 I will trust and not be afraid;
Dm Am
 For the Lord my God is my strength and my song,
G Am - A
 And He also has become my salvation

Chorus:
Dm Am E Am - A
 La, la, la, la la la, la, la ,la la...
Dm Am E Am - A
 La, la, la, la la la, la, la ,la la...

The Horse and Rider

C F
 I will sing unto the Lord for He's exalted mightily
G⁷ C
 The horse and rider thrown into the sea
C F
 I will sing unto the Lord for He's exalted mightily
G C
 The horse and rider thrown into the sea
C F
 The Lord my God my strength my song
G⁷ C
 Has now become my victory

C F
 The Lord is God and I will praise Him
G⁷ C
 My father's God and I will exalt Him
C F
 The Lord is God and I will praise Him
G⁷ C
 My father's God and I will exalt Him

Group #1

"Follow that Pillar" Clues

(To be given by teacher when questions are correctly answered)

Group #1 Clue #1

Go to the stairway next to the elevator and look at the outlet box on the landing for your next clue.

Group #1 Clue #2

Go to the metal post in the snack bar area for your next clue.

Group #1 Clue #3

Go to the plastic holder next to the bulletin board downstairs by the elevator.

Group #1 Clue #4

Go to the bottom of the stairs next to the elevator and find the wall heater for your next clue.

Group #1 Clue #5

Go back to your classroom and look <<wherever you put the suckers>>.

Group #2

"Follow that Pillar" Clues

(To be given by teacher when questions are correctly answered)

Group #2 Clue #1

Go to the metal post in the snack bar area for your next clue.

Group #2 Clue #2

Go to the plastic holder next to the bulletin board downstairs by the elevator.

Group #2 Clue #3

Go to the bottom of the stairs next to the elevator and find the wall heater for your next clue.

Group #2 Clue #4

Go to the stairway next to the elevator and look at the outlet box on the landing for your next clue.

Group #2 Clue #5

Go back to your classroom and look <<wherever you put the suckers>>.

Group #3

"Follow that Pillar" Clues

(To be given by teacher when questions are correctly answered)

Group #3 Clue #1

Go to the plastic holder next to the bulletin board downstairs by the elevator.

Group #3 Clue #2

Go to the bottom of the stairs next to the elevator and find the wall heater for your next clue.

Group #3 Clue #3

Go to the metal post in the snack bar area for your next clue.

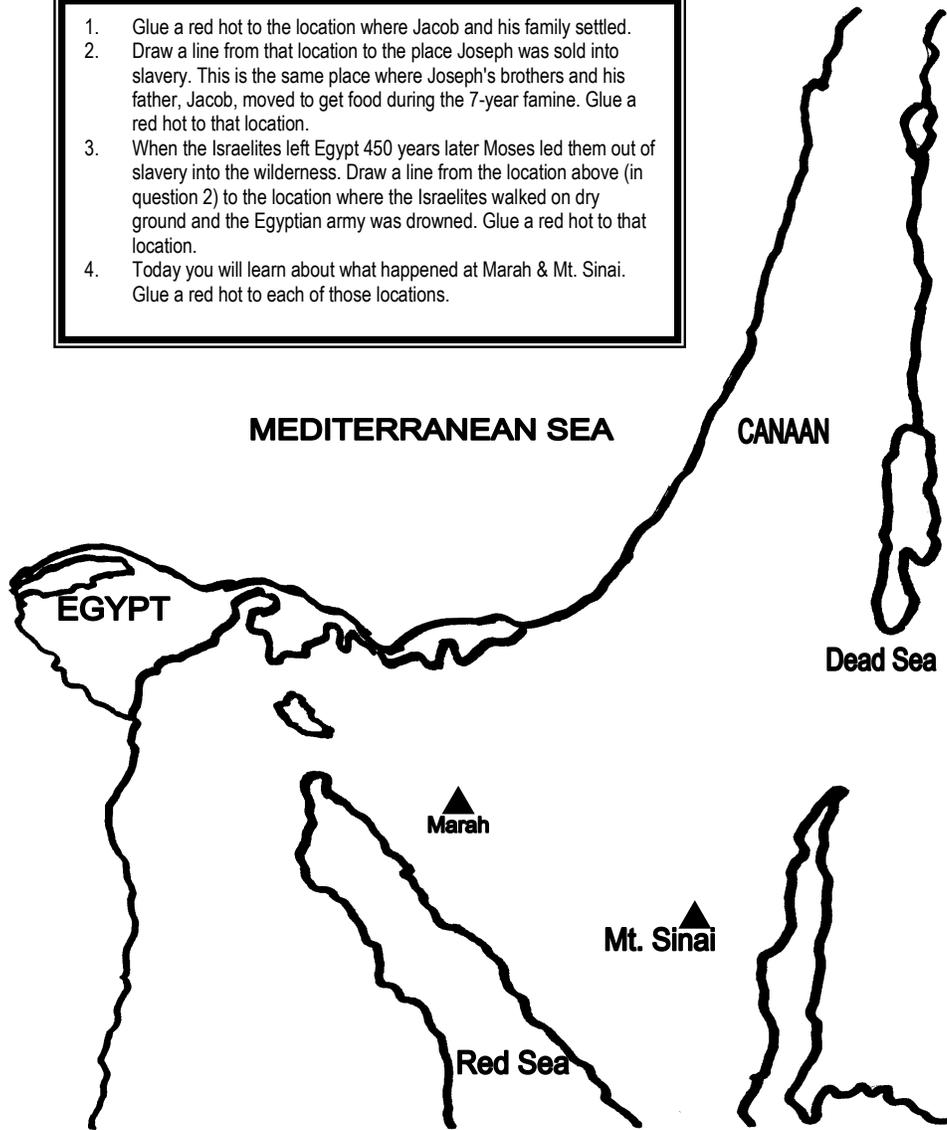
Group #3 Clue #4

Go to the plastic holder next to the bulletin board downstairs by the elevator.

Group #3 Clue #5

Go back to your classroom and look <<wherever you put the suckers>>.

1. Glue a red hot to the location where Jacob and his family settled.
2. Draw a line from that location to the place Joseph was sold into slavery. This is the same place where Joseph's brothers and his father, Jacob, moved to get food during the 7-year famine. Glue a red hot to that location.
3. When the Israelites left Egypt 450 years later Moses led them out of slavery into the wilderness. Draw a line from the location above (in question 2) to the location where the Israelites walked on dry ground and the Egyptian army was drowned. Glue a red hot to that location.
4. Today you will learn about what happened at Marah & Mt. Sinai. Glue a red hot to each of those locations.



GOD'S TRAVEL PLANS