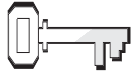


A Cloud Leads the Way



References

Exodus 13:21, 22;
14:19, 20; *Patriarchs
and Prophets*,
pp. 282-290



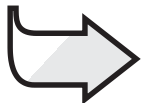
Memory Verse

"I seek you with all
my heart; do not
let me stray from
your commands"
(Psalm 119:10).



Objectives

The children will:
Know that they honor
and worship God
when they obey Him.
Feel a desire for God
to help them obey.
Respond by asking
God to help
them obey.



The Message

We worship God
when we obey Him.

Monthly Theme

We worship the Creator.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

After the Israelites leave Egypt and march toward the Promised Land, God sends a cloudy pillar by day and a pillar of fire by night to protect, guide, and provide light and warmth. Pharaoh's army comes after them and the pillar of cloud comes between the Israelites and the Egyptians. God divides the Red Sea, the Israelites walk through it on dry land, and the sea comes together and drowns the Egyptians. The Israelites worship God for saving them.

This is a lesson about worship.

Worshiping God involves respect and a willingness to obey what He says. If we say we worship and respect God, but don't follow His leading or obey His commandments, then we are not really worshiping Him at all. The Israelites were worshiping God when they followed His leading out of Egypt and through the Red Sea.

Teacher Enrichment

The Lord often spoke to Israel from the pillar (Numbers 12:5, 6; Deuteronomy 31:15, 16; Psalm 99:7). "In one of the most beautiful and comforting passages of Isaiah's prophecy, reference is made to the pillar of cloud and of fire to represent God's care for His people [Isaiah 4:5, 6]. . . .

"[Pharaoh's army consisted of] 'six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt,' horsemen, captains, and foot soldiers" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 283).

Room Decorations

Pictures or objects such as the following could be placed in various parts of the room: desert pictures or real sand and desert life in a flat box or on a cloth on the floor; something to represent the Red Sea parting; a map of the Israelites' journey from Egypt toward Canaan; tents; a likeness of the pillar of cloud, Aaron's rod that budded, and a picture or likeness of a big rock with water coming out.

Program Overview

| Lesson Section | Minutes | Activities | Materials Needed |
|------------------------------------|----------|---|---|
| Welcome | ongoing | Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled | none |
| 1 Readiness Options | up to 10 | <i>A. Follow the Rope</i> <i>B. People Tangle</i> | Bible, long rope, chairs and tables, small reward for each child Bible |
| Any Time Prayer and Praise* | up to 10 | Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer | none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> basket or bowl or tambourine <i>Sing for Joy</i> |
| 2 Bible Lesson | up to 20 | Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study | red paper clouds, white paper clouds Bible, pictures or drawings of eyes, glasses or binoculars, paper heart, traffic sign, dog on a leash, tablets of stone Bibles |
| 3 Applying the Lesson | up to 15 | <i>A. Think, Pair, Share</i> <i>B. Obedience Scenarios</i> | none Bibles |
| 4 Sharing the Lesson | up to 15 | <i>Ask Me</i> | markers, pencils, crayons, construction paper, door hanger pattern (see p. 142) |

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share an experience from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity that is most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bible
- long rope
- chairs and tables
- small rewards

A. Follow the Rope

Before class, place a rope on the floor and wind it in and around chairs, tables, and, if appropriate, out the classroom door and into other areas of the building. Have students follow the rope to its end. (Consider taking off shoes and walking on the rope.) At the other end, surprise them with a small reward.

Debriefing

Ask: **Would you have received the reward if you hadn't followed the rope?** (No.) Read aloud Exodus 13:21. **What would have happened if the Israelites hadn't followed the pillar?** (They might have been lost. They might have died in the desert.) **What has this taught us about following God's commands?** (God knows what is best for us.) **And that reminds us of our message for today:**



WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE OBEY HIM.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bible

B. People Tangle

Have the students stand in a circle. (Large class: Form groups of 8-10.) Students are to reach across the circle and grasp hands with another student. When all the hands are grasped and the arms are a big tangle in the middle, instruct the students to untangle themselves without letting go of their partner's hands. When they are unable to do this, begin to help them untangle by giving such instructions as "Katie, you lift your right arm over Kevin's head. Kevin, you duck down under Vanessa's arms," etc., until all the students are untangled.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why could I help you get untangled when you couldn't get untangled yourselves?** (You are taller; you were outside the circle; you could see things we couldn't see and knew something we didn't know.) Read aloud Jeremiah 33:3. **What does this verse tell us about the instructions God has given us?** (He sees things we can't see and knows things we don't know. He knows what is best for us. His directions are there to keep us from "getting tangled up" or to help us get "untangled.") **Today's message is:**



WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE OBEY HIM.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

"Psalm 118:24," "This Is the Day" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 94)

"I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 119)

"Trust and Obey" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 113)

"Teach Me, Lord" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 110)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Help the children identify obedience in the story and how it glorified God.



Offering

God saved the Israelites and they worshipped Him by celebrating with music and praise. They also worshipped Him when they obeyed His commands each step of the way. As the offering is collected, ask: **How does bringing an offering show obedience to God?**

You Need:

- bowl, basket, or tambourine for collecting offering



Prayer

Ask for prayer requests and thank-You's to Jesus. Ask the children to name some things God asks us to do. (Be kind, forgive, help others, study the Bible, take care of our health, go to church, etc.) During prayer time, also ask God to help us obey and to make us willing to do what He asks us to do. Close prayer time by singing together "Teach Me, Lord" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 110).

You Need:

- *Sing for Joy*

2

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- red paper “cloud” for each child
- white paper “cloud” for each child

Experiencing the Story

Instruct the children as follows:

| When they hear: | They do: |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| God | Point upward. |
| Pillar of cloud | Hold up white circle. |
| Light | Shade their eyes. |
| Pillar of fire | Hold up red circle. |

Read or tell the story.

Long ago in Bible times, the Hebrew people lived as slaves in the land of Egypt. The Egyptian people were mean. They so mistreated the Hebrew slaves that the Hebrews cried out to **God**. (*point upward*.) And **God** (*point upward*) raised up a great Hebrew leader named Moses.

Because Pharaoh would not listen, **God** (*point upward*) brought trouble on Egypt until their pharaoh ordered the Hebrews to leave Egypt immediately. Moses had warned the people to be packed and ready, so in a short time the Hebrews were on the road with all their belongings, their families, and their flocks and herds. **God** (*point upward*) led the people toward the Promised Land.

Because the Hebrews were loaded down and taking all their herds and flocks with them, they could not travel very fast. To show them the way, **God** (*point upward*) sent a tall **pillar of cloud**. (*Hold up white circle*.) The cloud went before the people, protecting them from the sun during the day. At night it became a **pillar of fire** (*hold up red circle*) that made their camp as **light** (*shade*

eyes) as day. What a comfort to look up and know that **God** (*point upward*) was taking such good care of them. The **pillar of cloud** (*hold up white circle*) was **God's** (*point upward*) way of showing His loving care.

When the pharaoh realized that the Hebrews were gone, he was upset. Now who would do the work? So the Egyptian army raced across the desert after them. The Hebrews were camped at the edge of the sea when someone noticed a cloud of dust on the horizon. “Pharaoh’s chariots!” somebody yelled. “Let’s get out of here!”

But they couldn’t go forward; the sea was in their way. They would drown. And they couldn’t go back; the Egyptians were coming down the road. And they couldn’t go to the side; a mountain blocked their way. They were trapped, and they were terrified.

“Don’t be afraid,” Moses encouraged. “Stand firm, and you will see the Lord deliver you today.”

As the Egyptian army drew closer, the **pillar of cloud** (*hold up white circle*) did something awesome. It moved up and over the Israelites and came to rest between them and the Egyptian army. On one side the cloud brought darkness to the Egyptians, but on the other side it gave **light** (*shade eyes*) to the Hebrews. The cloud kept the people safe all night.

“Tell the Israelites to move on,” **God** (*point upward*) said to Moses. Even though there was nothing but the Red Sea in front of them, the Israelites obeyed and headed for the water.

“Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea,” **God** (*point upward*) commanded. Moses obeyed, and a strong wind began to blow a path of dry ground through the sea. All that night the **pil-**

lar of fire (*hold up red circle*) provided **light** (*shade eyes*) as the Israelites walked through the Red Sea on dry ground with a wall of water on their right and a wall of water on their left.

The Egyptians followed, but as soon as the last of the Israelites was safely on the other side, the Lord told Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea so the waters will flow back together." Again Moses obeyed, and the entire Egyptian army was drowned in the Red Sea as the waters flowed back together.

What a celebration the Israelites had that morning on the far side of the Red Sea! "I will sing to **God** (*point upward*)," they sang. "The Lord is my strength and my song; He has become my salvation." That morning the Israelites knew for sure that **God** (*point upward*) loved them and they loved **God**. (*Point upward.*) They just wanted to worship Him. And they had been worshipping all night, for when we obey **God** (*point upward*) we worship Him.

Debriefing

Say: **Make believe you were in the crowd of Israelites when the Egyptians were chasing them. How do you think you would feel?** (scared, frightened) **God told Moses and the Israelites to march right into the Red Sea to escape from the Egyptians. What happened?** (The Israelites did what God said, and the sea opened for them. They arrived safely on the other side.) **When you follow what God says, what will be the result?** (You will be happy; you will be safe.) **The Israelites were so happy that they had a big worship celebration. God will work out what is best for our lives when we obey Him. Let's say our message together:**



WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE OBEY HIM.

Memory Verse

Read aloud Psalm 119:10. Say: **We can't see a pillar of cloud, but if we seek God when we pray and read the Bible every day, He will show us the way we should go. Let's learn this verse so we will never forget God.**

Put up flash cards as described below. Help the children read the verse by reading the words. Then replace the first flash card with the appropriate picture and read the entire verse. Next time, replace the second word with a picture, and read the verse. Repeat this step until the children can say the entire verse from the pictures. Finally, have them close their eyes and say the entire verse by remembering the pictures.

Phrase from the verse:

"I seek you"

"with all my heart"
"do not"

"let me stray"

"from your commands."

Picture to draw or cut from magazines:

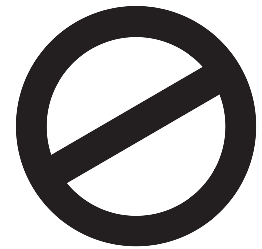
eyes, glasses/
binoculars

paper heart
traffic sign:
circle with a
slash

dog on leash or
adult holding
child's hand
tablets of stone

You Need:

- Bible
- pictures or drawings of: eyes, glasses or binoculars, paper heart, traffic sign, dog on a leash, tablets of stone



Conclude by saying: **We may want to obey God, but sometimes we stray from following His way. God will keep us from straying if we ask Him to.**

You Need:

- Bibles

Bible Study

Say: **We will read in the Bible the parts of today's story that show that Moses and the Israelites obeyed God.**

Helpers assist as needed. Have all the children find the same verse. (Large class: Form small groups.) Have the verses read aloud:

- Exodus 13:21
- Exodus 14:1-4
- Exodus 14:15, 16, 21, 22
- Exodus 14:26, 27

Debriefing

Ask: **What happened when the Israelites obeyed God?** (God saved them

from the Egyptian army.) **Did they know how God would solve their problem?** (No, but they still obeyed and trusted God.) **What do you think happens when we obey God when we are afraid or can't see a solution?** (God will help us just as He helped the Israelites.) **Why can we be sure that God will help us?** (Because we have Bible records that tell us how He has helped people in the past. Because God never changes.) **Obeying God is one way we can worship Him. Let's say our message together:**



WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE OBEY HIM.

3

Applying the Lesson

A. Think, Pair, Share

Ask the children to think about the Bible story. (Allow time.) Have them choose a partner and share the answer to the following:

From this story what do you know for sure about God? (He loves us; He cares for us; etc.) **What does this story tell you about worship?** (When we obey, we worship God; that praising God is worship; that worship is showing love; etc.)

What do you know for sure about you and God? (He loves me; I want to worship Him; etc.)

Tell the following story and do the debriefing afterward.

Muffy's Mission

Muffy is busy cleaning her room. "What are you doing, Muff?" you ask.

Muffy keeps working. "I am showing Mom how much I love her," she says.

Just then Muffy's mom calls her. Muffy doesn't go; she is too busy.

"But, Muff," you remind her, "don't you want to show your mom how much you love her?"

"Sure!" she replies. "That's why I am doing this. To show my love."

Debriefing

Ask: **If Muffy does not go when called, what will her mother think?** (Muffy doesn't love her enough to come quickly.)

Ask: **What did you learn in the Bible story that might help Muffy?** (She shows love when she obeys.)

Ask: **What do you think Muffy should do?** (Go when her mother calls, and finish cleaning her room later.)

Can you think of a time you found it hard to obey? Why was it so hard? When it seems hard to obey, ask God to help you. Remember ...



WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE OBEY HIM.

B. Obedience Scenarios

After reading each of the scenarios to the class, ask: **What are the possible alternatives, both good and bad? What is the best alternative? Why?**

1. Your mother has gone shopping. She has asked you to stay home and finish your schoolwork. Your friend next door wants you to come outside and play.

2. Your father calls you, but you are playing soccer and don't want to go in.

3. You have an exam in school. You do not know the answer to one

question. While the teacher is not looking, your friend offers to show you the answer.

Debriefing

Ask: **Is it always easy to obey? Why? What is the secret of obeying God? Let's look up and read Psalm 119:10** (the memory verse). Allow time. Find and read the text aloud together.

How can we seek God? (Study the Bible; study our Sabbath School lessons; listen to our pastor, parents, and teachers; pray and ask God to help us.) **Let's say our message together again:**



WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE OBEY HIM.

You Need:

- Bibles

4

Sharing the Lesson

Ask Me

The children will make doorknob hangers that say, "Ask me." They write the memory verse on the back, then they color and decorate the hangers and cut them out. They will hang them on their bedroom door.

After they are done, have the students get into pairs to practice this dialogue.

Student 1 (holding up doorknob): Ask me.

Student 2: Ask you what?

Student 1: Ask me how to worship God.

Student 2: How do you worship God?

Student 1: "I seek you with all my

You Need:

- markers, crayons, pencils
- construction paper
- door hanger pattern (see p. 142)

heart; do not let me stray from your commands" (Psalm 119:10).

Have the students switch roles.

Debriefing

Ask the students: **What does this text tell you about worship?** (That when we obey, we worship God.) **How will you use your door hanger this week to help someone want to obey and worship God? How will your door hanger help you to obey even if you don't feel like it? Let's say our message together:**



WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE OBEY HIM.

Closing

In a brief prayer, ask God to lead the children as He led the Israelites by guiding their thoughts and actions. Ask Him to help each child to follow His leading and to worship Him as they obey Him and their parents.



Ask Me.

A template is provided on page 142.

A Cloud Leads the Way

References

Exodus 13:21, 22; 14:19, 20; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 282-290

Memory Verse

"I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands" (Psalm 119:10).

The Message

We worship God when we obey Him.

John enjoyed summer camp. He was learning many new crafts. He especially liked leather craft. He followed his counselor's directions very carefully as he worked on a new wallet.

Our Bible story tells about a large group of people who also followed directions. They followed directions from God—unusual direction, but very important.

After 400 years of slavery the Israelites were finally on their way to the Promised Land. But which way should they go? All that stretched before them was the hot, dry wilderness.

God did not leave them to wonder. Instead, He led them personally, and in a way especially fitted for the desert. "By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night" (Exodus 13:21). During the day the cloud gave them shade from the sun's heat. At night when the desert became very cold, the pillar of fire provided heat as well as light. The cloud led the Israelites

into the desert and on to the Red Sea. There it stopped.

Soon the Egyptians realized that when the Israelites left, their supply of slaves were gone. In a short time Pharaoh's army raced across the desert. They wanted to get the Israelites back. The Israelites saw a great cloud of dust coming their way. From their camp at the edge of the sea, they could see the chariots racing toward them. What could they do? A mountain blocked their way on one side. The Red Sea kept them from going ahead. And Pharaoh's army kept coming straight at them. They were trapped, and they were terrified.

"Do not be afraid," said Moses. "Stand firm, and you will see the Lord deliver you today."

The Egyptian army drew closer. But God's cloud of protection did something awesome. It moved up and over the Israelites. Then it came to rest between them and the Egyptian army. On one side it became a cloud that brought darkness to the Egyptians. But on the other side it was fire that provided the Israelites with light.

"Tell the Israelites to move forward, into the sea," God said to Moses. Even though there was nothing but deep water in front of them, the Israelites obeyed.

They gathered their things and headed for the water.

"Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea," God commanded Moses. Moses obeyed, and a strong wind began to blow a path of dry ground through the sea. All that night the pillar of fire provided light. And the Israelites walked through the Red Sea on dry ground. The wall of water on their right and left stayed in place.

The Egyptians followed the Israelites into the sea. As soon as the last of the Israelites arrived safely on the other side, the Lord spoke to Moses again. "Stretch out your hand



over the sea so the waters will flow back together.” Again Moses obeyed. And the Egyptian army drowned in the Red Sea as the waters flowed back together.

What a celebration the Israelites had that morning on the far side of the Red Sea. “I will sing to the Lord, for He is highly exalted,” they praised. “The Lord is my strength and my song; He has become my salvation.” What a worship service that was!

That morning the Israelites worshipped God in a special way. They wanted to thank Him for keeping them safe. But if they had not obeyed, there never would have been a victory celebration. Imagine what would have happened if they had not followed God’s command. Their obedience was an act of worship just as much as the celebration they enjoyed that morning.

Worship is honoring God. We can use our voices and our songs to honor God. And our lives can honor Him too, when we do what He asks.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If possible, go to a lake or river with your family. Find a quiet place and read your lesson story. Imagine how the Israelites felt when the sea parted and they were able to walk through. Do you think they were sometimes scared? What does God want us to do when we are scared?
- Read your memory verse to your family.
- Sing “Trust and Obey” (*Sing for Joy*, no. 113).

Sunday

- Ask an adult to help you make some cookies. Talk about following the recipe. Read the directions and start mixing things together. If you add extra salt, what difference would it make? If you throw in a handful of sand, will the cookies be good? Why is it important to follow directions? Why is it important to follow God’s directions (rules)? Read Proverbs 3:5-8 and Deuteronomy 30:16 together.
- Teach your memory verse to your family.

Monday

- For family worship, read Exodus 13:21, 22; 14:19, 20. If possible, go outside and look at some clouds. Imagine following one of them when you go on a trip. Share with your family what you think that would be like. In what ways does God lead you and your family? Are you following Him?
- Sing “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus” (*Sing for Joy*, no. 119). Tell Jesus that when you pray.
- In your own words, tell your family what your memory verse means.

Tuesday

- During family worship, draw a picture of persons

you should obey. What does God say about obeying certain people? Read together Ephesians 6:1-3 and Romans 13:1. Discuss: Why should I obey these people? When I obey them, do I worship them?

- Draw a picture of Jesus and a Bible. Read John 14:15. Write on your picture: “When I obey Jesus, I worship Him.” Show it to your family.

Wednesday

- For worship today, read Genesis 6:22 and Genesis 12:1, 4. On the lines below, write the names of the two people who obeyed God.

-
- Light a candle. How much light does it give? What would it be like to see a pillar of fire?

Thursday

- During family worship, draw a face on each side of a paper plate. On one side, make a smiley face to represent Jesus’ happy way. On the other side, make a frowning face to represent Satan’s unhappy way. Which kind of face will you choose? Ask your family members to tell about times that are Jesus’ way or Satan’s way. Show the face on the plate that goes with each.
- Read John 10:10, last part, together.
- Say your memory verse together. Ask God to help you always to obey Him.

Friday

- For family worship, act out the lesson story. Then read Exodus 15:1-18 together.
- Read Psalm 143:10 together. Then pray together as a family. Say your memory verse as part of your prayer.