

**CROSSING THE RED SEA
(EXODUS 14)**



“And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry *land*, and the waters were divided.”

EXODUS 14:21

Copyright © CalvaryCurriculum.com
Used by Permission

WELCOME

Hello Everyone,

Welcome to our Family Liturgy at Home; St Mary's Parish outreaching to families with children for the second Sunday of each month. This liturgy is quite simple with scripture readings, reflection, prayers and ideas for creative responses to the story. In this liturgy we reflect on story telling in both the Old Testament and a Parable.

The gospel reading is one of Jesus' parables and the Old Testament reading is a story from the book of Exodus. Both are very different stories and both have messy endings. One is an epic adventure about Moses and the Israelites escaping captivity and the other is a parable about forgiveness and justice. It is about the love of God and has a unique and deep message that applies to everyone today.

I pray you are uplifted by St Mary's Family Liturgy at Home and can discover Jesus messages as you reflect on the parable. You are invited to join us for Children's Church at 10.30 in Kojonup on Sunday September 27th to explore the Old Testament Story and how it points to Jesus. Blessings, Vicki Webb. Email: va.webb@bigpond.com

MINISTRY OF THE WORD

Opening Prayer

God of Wisdom, May we treasure the gift of family life as we read, reflect, pray and create together. May we know the wisdom of listening to each other, the healing of wholesome words and the power of creativity: your gift for us to share as we continue to contemplate God in our hearts throughout the coming weeks. **Amen**

Readings

Exodus 14.19-31 (Parting of the Red Sea)

Psalm 114 (God's Wonders at the Exodus)

Romans 14.1-14 (Don't Judge Another)

Gospel Reading and Reflection: Matthew 18.21-35 (NRSV)

21 Then Peter came and said to him, 'Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?'²² Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.'

23 'For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves.²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him,²⁵ and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold,

together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made.²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything."²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt.²⁸ But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, "Pay what you owe."²⁹ Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you."³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt.³¹ When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place.³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, "You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me.³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?"³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt.³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'

Reflection

Story telling in ancient times was the way people remembered what God had done for them in the past. Very few people in those times could read or write and history was handed down orally through the generations in the stories that were told. The Old Testament reading today is one such story written down in the book of Exodus. It is an epic adventure of how Moses trusted God to lead his people to safety through a sea that became dry ground around them.

I well remember listening to this story as a child with wonder and awe at how God had protected Moses and the Israelites. I was a bit perplexed though at how the poor old Egyptians chasing Moses met their fate. I wondered how a loving God could let such a thing happen: there must have been a less 'messy' way surely. It was an epic story however like many of the Old Testament stories about the people of God and I accepted the story at face value. I do recall feeling relief at being on God's team so to speak and able to follow Jesus message, as told through his parables, of a loving and forgiving God.

The New Testament gospel reading for today is one such parable told by Jesus in response to a question from the disciple Peter about how often he needed to forgive others. Parables are fictional stories told to help people understand transcendent symbols such as forgiveness and Jesus used parables to tell people what the Kingdom of God would be like. Jesus' parables are very down to earth and told using everyday situations so ordinary people could reflect on the message for them at that time and in that place. When we reflect deeply on parables today they can be quite profound and also relevant to situations in this time and place.

This parable has a 'messy' ending though as does the Old Testament story. As I reflected more deeply on each ending, I realised the ending in the Old Testament story was the way people in ancient times thought of suffering as God's anger at their disobedience. In Jesus day suffering was also considered God's anger as a consequence of disobedience. Jesus however introduces a new way to understand God as a loving God showing mercy to all who truly repent. Perhaps because God loves us as children then God also suffers because of the mess we create when we refuse to repent just like the disobedient servant in the parable who is forgiven by God but refuses to forgive others and life becomes 'messy'.

Wonder questions to contemplate

I wonder why the King wished to settle his accounts?
I wonder how the parable answered Peter's question?
I wonder where you would be in the parable?
I wonder what made the King change his mind?
I wonder what you would do if you were the King?
I wonder if you can remember a messy time in your life when you refused to forgive?

PRAYERS

The Lords Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be your name.
Your Kingdom come.
Your will be done,
On earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power
and the glory are yours now and forever. **Amen**

Personal Prayer

Forgiving God, I owe you so much. Thank you that you forgive my debt when I truly repent for you are a loving God who wants only to protect and care for me and all creation. Please help me not to judge others who treat me unfairly but to forgive my debtors wholeheartedly just as you do. Please help me to stand up for others when I see them treated unfairly. **Amen**

Prayers for the People

God our Creator, please accept our prayers. We give thanks that we can worship in this special way as a family. We thank you for your Son Jesus Christ, and for your Holy Spirit as we serve others throughout the week. We thank you for the rain that refreshed our pastures and we pray for seasonal good falls for the welfare of our livestock as we approach summer. We thank you for all churches, schools and community organisations adapting technology to keep children and families engaged at this time. Pour out your blessings on all people ministering in this way to strengthen children and families to know your Love in their lives. We ask to be non-judgmental and forgiving of others and yet discern when it is the right time to stand up for justice in your world.

Jesus Christ our Redeemer, We pray for people living in communities where the Covid19 pandemic is increasing. Be with people in places across the globe, experiencing an upturn in Corona Virus cases and further lock down measures to make their communities safe. May the vulnerable and those experiencing fear and anxiety be protected. Pour out your Spirit on health workers and those on the front line risking their own health and lives to serve others. We ask that where the pandemic

is causing fear and anxiety, you guide authorities as they discern the best way to tackle outbreaks that will protect both people and their livelihoods. We ask that people everywhere turn to you for forgiveness and not be caught up in the mess of blaming others. We ask that times of social isolation be a time for reflection with opportunities to choose the joy of new life in Christ.

Holy Spirit our Sanctifier, We thank you for your forgiving Spirit as we worship in our homes today. May we continue to discern your desire for ministry with families with children in our community and region. May those working with our local and regional churches be strengthened and encouraged in the work they do as they come to recognise your Spirit working in the lives of children. Grant those called to provide soul care to isolated Christians in rural areas a Spirit of enthusiasm and inclusion to discern your desire for this ministry and give them freedom to carry forward this work to your glory. Protect those you call to a deep spiritual journey and grant us all a prayerful and disciplined approach in all we do to your glory. Pour blessings on all families as they contemplate your place in their lives at this time. May the hearts of children and young people be filled with your Spirit. Grant us all a desire to hear more about Jesus and his forgiving presence in our lives. Grant us all the Spirit of childhood and may we forgive others for anything that prevented your love from encircling family homes as well as places of learning and work. Protect all who choose to follow Jesus as little children and enter your Kingdom of Love.

Merciful God you have promised to hear our prayers. Grant that what we have asked in faith we may by your grace receive. **Amen**

Prayer of the Day

God of mercy, help us to forgive as you have forgiven us, to trust you, even when hope is failing, and to take up our cross daily and follow you in your redeeming work; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Blessing (Said together)

May God pour out blessings on our family as we go out from our homes in the power of the Holy Spirit to love and serve others, in the name of Christ. **Amen**

Creative Activities

We finish our time of worship with a creative response to the story. It is a time when we can be messy (as long as we tidy up our own mess). There are two stories to choose from or you may even like to do both. Exodus 14.19-31 is the Old Testament epic and lends itself to creative retelling. Blues and greens and frothy crepe and tissue paper are perfect to sculpture waves. Draw and cut out figures of Moses and his followers or use toys. Adding a cloud by day and a fire by night to your props can be a creative way to retell the story.

To practice the messages of forgiveness or fighting for justice as in Jesus' parable (symbol) you could make a crown and take turns to practice forgiving someone or even act as a group of friends reporting an injustice. There is a mindful colouring in on the front page and a word search on the back. Make it a fun family time and share each other's unique responses.

Word Search

The Parting of the Red Sea

And when the Israelites saw the mighty hand of the LORD displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant.
Exodus 14:31 (NIV)



The puzzle is based on Exodus 14:19-31

T Y W E U J N W C I Z N X S S
W T C B K L J P M O S E S V C
U H P Z E Q U P D X S Z H R L
X K A A Z V A C G S M E N K O
F F R N Y T Q P H R Y L A T U
X S C T D L D W W A O P Y D D
I V D H F K D T A G R U S V B
F D D R Y E S R T L A I N U D
S V X Q Y F P A E B H J O D W
N K T R U S T V R W B B X T S
L L U E L S F E H K L Y P E S
B A U U B A M L C E I H S T M
S V R J J V F I G G P R T G P
G W X M A E Y N S N O T I I V
Z P T Y Y D A G O H L W Z K A

WATER	TRAVELING	GROUND	ARMY	CHARIOTS
DRY	SEA	SAVED	MOSES	HORSES
ANGEL	HAND	CLOUD	TRUST	ISRAEL