

Escape To Egypt

Matthew 2:13-23

MEMORY VERSE

HOSEA 11:1

“When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My Son.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Black construction paper, several magazines to cut out pictures and scissors.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

"I've Got a Secret"

Divide the class into two groups of children.

Tell one group of children a "secret." Instruct them not to tell anyone from the other group what the secret is. (You can make the secret anything; for example, the secret could be your birthday or middle name.)

Let the class mingle and talk for a while, and instruct the group that does not know the secret to try and figure it out (make sure you monitor any physical persuasion).

After a couple of minutes, regain the attention of the class with the attention getting signal, and tell all the children what the secret is. You will refer back to this activity later in the lesson.

LESSON TIME!

This morning we are going to learn that **the Lord is our rock, our fortress and our deliverer**. We will be looking at a very special story from Jesus' life when His parents had to put their trust in the Lord to help them with a very difficult problem. We can also put our trust in the Lord for anything. Let's begin with the book of Psalms and see what David says about the Lord.

PSALM 18:1-3

I will love You, O LORD, my strength.

The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised; So shall I be saved from my enemies.

There are four "I will" statements in these verses. What are they?

1. I will love...
2. I will trust...
3. I will call...
4. I will be saved...

Why do you think David said these things to the Lord? Perhaps he said these things in response to the Lord's great promises. Let's look at what the Lord promises here. He promises to be our:

1. Strength.
2. Rock.
3. Fortress.
4. Deliverer.

5. Shield.
6. Stronghold.

Who is our enemy? (Satan). If God promises that He is all of these things for us, what can Satan do to us? Nothing! If God is for us, who can be against us (Romans 8:31)? **The Lord is our rock, our fortress and our deliverer.** Who should we turn to when we have problems in our life? We need to turn to the Lord who is strong and solid. We can always trust in Him to help us in our time of need.

Let's turn to Matthew where we will learn about two very obedient people who trusted God's word at a difficult time. We'll see how the Lord delivered them.

MATTHEW 2:13-14

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him."

When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt,

Remember when the wise men came and visited Jesus and brought him gifts? Afterward, the wise men went back home without telling Herod where Jesus was. This made Herod very angry. He wanted to kill Jesus in order to keep Jesus from becoming king. Now, an angel came to Joseph in a dream. The angel told Joseph to take the child and Mary and flee to Egypt. What is in Egypt? Egypt was the country to the south of Israel that God used Moses to deliver His people from in the Old Testament. Obediently, Joseph took Mary and Jesus and fled to Egypt. The Lord protected them and

delivered them from their enemies, because **the Lord is our rock, our fortress and our deliverer.**

Is it ok to hide sometimes when we are in danger? The Lord told Joseph and Mary to take baby Jesus and hide for a while in Egypt. It is not always the best thing to confront someone who is being mean to us. We need to pray and ask the Lord guidance and protection if someone bigger than us is being mean. Sometimes we need to take a stand on things, but other times, it is good to walk away. No matter what happens though, we can trust that **the Lord is our rock, our fortress and our deliverer.**

What exactly does it mean that the Lord is our rock, our fortress, and our deliverer? Often times in the Bible we see the Lord referred to as a rock. What can you think of that is stronger than a large rock? There is not much that can happen to a rock. God is very strong, and we can be sure that nothing will happen to Him. When people build a house, it is important to build it on a strong foundation. That is why houses are built on rock and not sand.

Jesus told a story about wise man who built his house upon the rock and a foolish man who built his house upon the sand. When the storms came, the foolish man's house was washed away. We need to wise and build our lives on the solid rock, Jesus Christ. Jesus is our rock. He is our firm foundation upon which we can build a very blessed life.

"Rock and Sand" Game

Pick two children to sit in two chairs. On one chair put a blanket or large towel.

Have the children sit down. Have one child sit on top of the blanket that is draped over the chair and the other one on the chair without the blanket. After the children are seated, slide the uncovered chair around the room a little bit. (Make sure the child is securely seated).

On the other chair, slowly slide the blanket or towel from under the child, causing him to slide off of the chair (don't actually let him fall off).

Illustrate for the children that the chair with the blanket is like the sandy foundation because it is not stable or secure. Compare that to a life without Jesus, our rock and foundation.

What do you think of when you think of a fortress? It is kind of like a big fort, or maybe even a castle. A fortress is made for defense from enemies. We have an enemy, the devil. When we put our trust in the Lord, we will be protected from the attacks of the enemy in our lives. There is only one way to enter into a fortress, and there is only one way to the Father, through Jesus. Jesus said:

JOHN 14:6

..."I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

God is also our deliverer. He will rescue us and help us when we are in trouble. Just like God used Moses to deliver the children of Israel slavery in Egypt, Jesus has come to deliver us from sin, this world, and the enemy. All we need to do is to put our trust in Him. He delivered Joseph and Mary from King Herod, and He will deliver you and me from our enemy, Satan. It is wonderful that **the Lord is our rock, our fortress and our deliverer?**

Rock, Fortress, Deliverer Collage

Pass out a piece of black construction paper to each child in your class. Have the children cut out magazine pictures of rocks, mountains, and castles.

Have the children paste the pictures in a collage on the black paper.

MATTHEW 2:15

...and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My Son."

Joseph, Mary, and Jesus stayed in Egypt until Herod died. While they were there, the scripture was fulfilled which prophesied that the Messiah would come out of Egypt:

HOSEA 11:1

"When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son."

Joseph and Mary first traveled from Nazareth to Bethlehem, where Jesus was born. Then the wise men came and visited Jesus in Bethlehem. Warned in a dream, Joseph and Mary fled with Jesus to Egypt. After about two years they returned, but they were warned in a dream not to return to Bethlehem. So, they went to the region of Galilee, which is where Nazareth is.

It is interesting that no matter who is in power God is still in control. Even mean King Herod could not destroy baby Jesus, no matter how hard he tried. God is in control, and His plans will stand no matter what anyone might try to do to stop them.

MATTHEW 2:16-18

Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men.

Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying:

"A voice was heard in Ramah, Lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, Refusing to be comforted, Because they are no more."

When Herod realized that the wise men did not return to inform him Jesus' location, he decided to kill all the male children two years old or younger in Bethlehem and the surrounding areas. Herod thought if he could destroy all the male children, there would not be any chance for a king to rise up and take over his kingdom. Herod did not know it, but Jesus was already crowned King of kings and Lord of lords before Herod was ever born.

Herod was so cruel that history tells us he even put to death several of his own wives and children whom he suspected were plotting to kill him. The prophecy from Jeremiah claimed that Rachel was weeping for her children and refused to be comforted because her children were being destroyed. Although this was going on in Bethlehem and surrounding areas, Joseph, Mary, and Jesus were secure because **the Lord is our rock, our fortress and our deliverer.**

"I've Got a Secret" Discussion

Refer back to the attention grabber game, "I've Got a Secret."

Ask questions of the children who did not know the secret about how they felt and what they were willing to do to find out the secret.

Point out that Herod was very angry when the wise men did not return to tell him the secret of where Jesus was. Ask the children to recount what Herod did in his anger and desperation to maintain his power.

MATTHEW 2:19-21

But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,

saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child's life are dead."

Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel.

After Herod died, an angel appeared to Joseph, while he was still in Egypt. The angel told Joseph to do three specific things: arise, take, and go. When the Lord speaks to us we need to listen to what he says, trust Him, and obey. Can anyone guess what Joseph did after the angel told him to return? He arose, took Jesus, and went to the land of Israel.

Can you think of some other people in the Bible that an angel or angels appeared to? After they sinned in Genesis, Adam and Eve were forbidden to eat from the tree of life by the cherubim who held a flaming sword. In Isaiah, the Angel of the Lord destroyed an army of 185,000 in one evening. The angel Gabriel came and ministered to Daniel and Zechariah. Can you think of any other times in the Bible angels are mentioned?

"Angels" Quiz

Divide the class into three or four teams (be sure to make the teams even as far as "Bible knowledge" is concerned).

Ask the teams questions about man's encounter with angels according to scripture.

Reward the winning team with a small prize like erasers or stickers.

Possible Questions:

1. Who slept on a stone pillow at Bethel and had a dream of a stairway to heaven? Jacob (Genesis 28:10-15).
2. Where did a group of shepherds receive angels as late night visitors? Near Bethlehem.
3. How many angels rescued Lot and his family from the doomed city of Sodom? Two.
4. Which Gospel says that an angel rolled away the stone from Jesus' tomb? Matthew.
5. How many angels will be at the gates of the New Jerusalem? Twelve.
6. According to Jesus, what causes angels to rejoice? A repentant sinner.
7. What prophet was fed two meals by an angel? Elijah.

Extra Credit Questions (these are riddles so put on your thinking cap):

1. Where did Noah strike the first nail on the ark? The head.
2. What is the first medicine mentioned in the Bible? The two tablets God gave Moses.
3. Who was the fastest runner in the Bible? Adam he was first in the human race.
4. How long did Cain hate his brother? As long as he was Abel.
5. When the ark landed on Ararat, was Noah the first one out? No, he came "forth" out of the ark.
6. Was there money on Noah's ark? Yes, the duck had a bill, the skunk had a scent, and the frog had a greenback.
7. When was Adam created? A little before Eve.
8. What is black and white, but should always be read? The Bible.

MATTHEW 2:22-23

But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee.

And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

When Joseph heard that Herod's son, Archelaus, was ruling as king, Joseph was afraid to go to Judea. Have you ever been afraid of someone or something before? Have you ever been afraid to go somewhere? Remember, **the Lord is our rock, our fortress and our deliverer**. Anytime we feel afraid, we just have to remember that we can hide in Jesus, our rock. We can run into the fortress of His protection. He will deliver us just like He delivered Joseph, when he was afraid.

God will take care of you just as He took care of Joseph, Mary, and His Son Jesus. We can always trust in Him. **The Lord is our rock, our fortress and our deliverer.**

OPTIONS FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

Bring into class a big rock and a tightly closed jar with sand. Use these visual aids as you discuss building our lives on a rock or shifting sand.

Make a shield out of cardboard large enough to cover the average sized child in your class. Have the children stand or crouch behind the shield while other children throw beanbags, Nerf balls, or wadded paper balls at the shield. Explain how Jesus is our shield and protection.

What is a promise? Explain to your class what a promise is. Demonstrate some promises with one or two children. For example, tell one child, "I promise you that I will hug you," and hug the child. Tell another, "I promise you that I will tickle you," and tickle the child. Explain to the class, each time you made a promise, you did what you said you were going to do. Ask the children if they know some of the promises God has made:

He loves us.

He will never leave us.

He will forgive us.

He will protect and deliver us.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving for the security we find in Jesus Christ. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.