

## Aim of lesson

To review the Israelites' wandering in the wilderness to see that life with God has purpose; without God it is an aimless wandering.

## Bible background

Psalm 105 & 106; Exodus 13:17-22; 14; 15; 16:1-21; 17:1-7; 32:1-7; Numbers 16:1-35 and Joshua 1:1-4. See also 1 Corinthians 10:1-12.

## Outline of lesson

### Leaving Egypt

Ask the class to imagine what it must have been like to have been a slave in Egypt and how they must have felt when leaving. The whole nation, possibly two million people, had been slaves for as long as anyone there could remember.

### The first problem – at the Red Sea

The first problem arises. Pharaoh changes his mind. Take the class to Exodus 14 and summarise verses 5 – 31. Ask them to look at the different attitudes in verses 11 & 12, and 13 & 14. All the problems that present themselves to the Israelites sort the people out. All go through the same experiences but some trust God and therefore grow and develop whilst others become bitter, complaining and learning nothing of God in the process.

### Two ways through the wilderness

Have the class open their Bibles at Psalm 105 and 106, and with one colour felt pen trace on the work sheet the right hand path out of Egypt. Write one word in each box to explain the fault or result shown in the verse given. With another colour trace the left hand path; write the key word in that case too. The result should be something like this:

Psalm 106:9-10 Led, saved	Psalm 106:7 Provoked
Psalm 105:39 Guided, protected	Psalm 106:13 Forgot works
Psalm 105:40 Food	Psalm 106:14 Tested God
Psalm 105:41 Water to drink	Psalm 106:16 Envied Moses
Psalm 106:12 Believed, praised	Psalm 106:19 Worshipped calf
Psalm 105:43 Joy	Psalm 106:24-25 Disbelieved, murmured
Psalm 105:44 Inherit land	Psalm 106:17,18 Pit, fire

Having discussed the list of words each has on the two paths, go through each step of the right hand path. Discuss how we can provoke God today and forget his works, etc. Then go through each step of the left hand path considering in turn how the follower of Christ is saved, guided and protected. How does God provide for us on our journey?

## Digging deeper

### Moses' faith

Moses faith was essential to help him do all that he did. We can see how it also helped the people in their battle with the Amalekites and their trust in the bronze serpent – these events are not otherwise covered in these lessons. We also have faith in Jesus – lifted up and drawing all men unto him (John 12:32)

## Relevance to our lives

It may be possible for each of your class to take one of the positive elements in the left hand path and, during the week, interview a few members of your meeting on what it means to them to be guided and protected by God, or what a Christian's spiritual food and drink is, or what it means to them to praise God. If you do this, give some time next week to allow them to report back.

## Prayer

Lord God, our Father, help us to live all our lives under your direction so that we will not wander aimlessly but will reach your coming kingdom.

## Other suggestions for activities

- Many of the incidents touched on briefly in this lesson could be looked at in more detail. Several would be suitable for drama.
- A large version of the 'wandering maze' could be made with illustrations in each of the boxes.