

# SERMON NOTES

## Exodus 13:17-14:31-Crossing the Red Sea

- The Exodus story is a pointer to our story of redemption by Jesus Christ from the tyranny of sin.
- The sight of the pursuing Egyptians made the Israelites forget God's past mercies and they accused Moses of being uncaring. In Mark 6:31, Jesus invited his disciples to go on a boat trip with him for a rest. Mid way into the sea of Galilee, a fierce storm arose which made the disciples cry out in desperation, "Don't you care Jesus that we perish"?

Lesson 1.: When God is leading in a situation, His presence is assured but that does not remove the possibility of danger or problems. What is needed at every stage is to trust Him.

Lesson 2: Redemption is three-fold: The Israelites were **saved and led out of Egypt, they were being saved** from the ferocious attack of the Egyptians, and **God continued to protect them from enemies until they reach the promised land.**

In Exodus 13:17 – 14:31

**God leads, and walks alongside his people, though we may not understand his ways at times.** Why did He not lead them by the more direct road passing through the country of the Philistines? Because He knew they were not ready to meet a possible armed challenge of the Philistine armies. **God sees the future and orders the present to fit into his perfect plan.**

Look at v.19. Moses took the bones of Joseph along. That on its own, is an indication that the promises God made to them some 450 years back which Joseph believed, were waiting to be fulfilled - not in Egypt, or in the wilderness but in the promised land. Each time they looked at the coffin of Joseph, it would be a reminder that God was not done with them.

God was not only their deliverer from Egypt, He assumed the role of their physical GPS, which led them to a seeming dead end. **But as far as God is concerned, if He leads you to a wall, it's because He will take you through it. If He leads you to a sea, trust that He will make a way through it.**

14:1-8. Pharaoh learnt about their wandering and he must have thought, 'I have them where they cannot escape.' He thought he was in charge, but he was just a pawn in the hands of our great God.

God continued to demonstrate his presence. **God who saves is the same God who stays and leads.** In our contemporary experience, Jesus promised his followers that the Holy Spirit will come to you...to lead, to teach, to guide and to empower. (John 14-16; Acts 1:8)

The Egyptians mustered about 600 choice chariots and charioteers. As Pharaoh approached, looking at the dust that must have been generated by the chariots and horses in the desert environment, the Israelites were rightly afraid. **But what did they do with their fear? That is the crucial question for us.**

They cried out in terror to God. Nothing wrong with that. But what follows was disturbing. Complaints. *"Didn't we say to you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians?' It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert."* Incredible isn't it? A blasphemous protest against the deliverer the Lord has appointed. **They failed to understand that God had a plan and His way is best. But God in His mercy did not abandon them in anger.**

True story: A woman was driving home at night along a highway when she became aware that a large truck was tail-gating her. She slowed down to allow the driver to pass, but he slowed down to her speed. She sped up; so did the truck. Beginning to get nervous, she took the next exit. The truck driver exited, too, and stayed right on her tail. She turned onto a main street, and the truck driver ran a red light to stay with her. Beginning to panic, she drove into a service station, jumped out of her car and began running and screaming for help, the truck driver pulled in right behind her, jumped from the cab of his truck, ran to her car, jerked open the rear door, and pulled out a man who was crouching behind the front seat. From his high vantage point, the truck driver had seen a would-be rapist hiding in the back of the woman's car, unknown to her. What she perceived as a threat was really an act of kindness. **That's the way God is... We may not see the reason for what He's doing; but in those times, we can trust that God knows what He is about.**

Our pilgrim pathway is no less perplexing than Israel's. There are cul-de-sacs and dead-ends, Red Seas and tempests on our journey, too. We complain to God, "Why have you allowed this to happen?" But what should we do with our fears?

Remember: (1) **God's ways may be perplexing, and sometimes very painful, but they are, nevertheless, His ways and His ways are best.** (2) **His often perplexing and painful ways are designed to magnify His Name and glory.** (3) **The ways of God, though perplexing and painful will always bring us to a place of singing and praise (Exodus 15).**

Verses 13-18.

God vouched to fight for them. Moses spoke to the people: "Don't be afraid. Stand firm and watch God do his work of salvation for you today while you keep silent."

From what God had revealed to Moses, he was confident of the defeat and destruction of the Egyptian army, now hotly pursuing them. What Moses was apparently not aware of was **how** and **when** this victory would occur.

#### **(14:21-31) - Israel's Deliverance and the Egyptians' Destruction**

Moses obeyed God, and so stretched out his hand over the sea. This brought about a "strong east wind" which drove back the sea all night long, turning the seabed to dry ground (v. 21). But God was not done yet. He had to perform the second part of his promise that *'these Egyptians you see today; you will see no more'*. Ex. 14:13

God instructed Moses to stretch forth his hand on the sea after the Israelites had crossed over, then the water returned and engulfed the armies of Egypt. When Israel saw the great power which the Lord had used against the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord, and they believed in the Lord and in His servant Moses. (v.31)

**Note:** Sometimes the sea does not part, and the problem doesn't disappear. Even then, God is at work to glorify Himself. He does it by being with us and sustaining us in such a way that even in apparent defeat our spirit remains victorious. He did not remove Paul's thorn in the flesh, and the cup of God's wrath was not taken from Jesus in spite of his plea, but through his shed blood, all who put their trust in Him will not face the second death.

#### **Application:**

Brothers and sisters, when the battle for ownership rages in your life, talk to Jesus. When unholy thoughts are waging a war of attrition in your heart, ask Jesus to fight for you and He will. Salvation belongs to the Lord from eternity past to the end and it is up to Him to sustain you. **God who saves is the same God who stays with you always.**

If you are still not sure your life is secure in Jesus' hands for present and future protection, now is the best time to invite him into your heart. He has never lost any battle and yours will not be the first. **The choice is yours.**

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