

**"Departure from Egypt"**

**Part 4**

**Exodus 12-14**

**Introduction:** In the book of Isaiah we read of how God often works in ways that are far beyond our understanding.

**Isaiah 55:8-9**

<sup>8</sup> *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.*

<sup>9</sup> *For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

When we follow the Lord and we find ourselves in a situation that is high pressure, or that is painful, or that is frightening we seem to forget about these verses from Isaiah. No matter what we face in life we know that it has come because our Lord has permitted it to happen. We know that He is in the process of making us into the image of His Son.

**Philippians 1:6**

<sup>6</sup> *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:*

**Romans 8:28-29**

<sup>28</sup> *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

<sup>29</sup> *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

I point these verses out because when life is difficult, we often get frustrated because we cannot understand why God has allowed us to be in a situation that is frightening, painful, or stressful. But as Isaiah tells us, God's ways are far above our ways. Paul speaks of the unsearchable ways of God in Romans.

**Romans 11:33-34**

<sup>33</sup> *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!*

<sup>34</sup> *For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?*

Last week in our study we looked at a lesson from the path which God chose for the Israelites as they began their journey out of Egypt.

### The Path of the Journey

As Israel departed from Egypt there are three places that are mentioned which we considered last week.

- A. Rameses - The Place of Bitterness.
- B. Land of the Philistines - The Place of Battle.
- C. Wilderness of the Red Sea - The Place of Barrenness.

Tonight, we are going to continue to follow Israel out of Egypt.

### I. The Sea of Deliverance

In our journey tonight we are going to make our way with Israel toward the Red Sea. It will be at the Red Sea where we will get to see one of the greatest miracles in God's Word. God will part the waters and He will allow Israel to cross on DRY ground and then He will drown Pharaoh and his military in the sea.

Now there are people who want to downplay the miracle which happened at the Red Sea. I was reading a story of a minister who did not believe the crossing of the Red Sea was such a great miracle and he was doing his best to convince the young people of his beliefs. He gave the idea that Israel crossed in a very shallow part of the Red Sea and therefore it was not the great miracle many claimed it to be. But there was a young boy in his class that made a great statement. He reminded the teacher that if the water was very shallow then the miracle was far greater than he realized for in **SHALLOW WATER** God drowned Pharaoh and his military.

I believe we can see the greatness of the miracle in several other Bible verses.

#### Isaiah 51:10

<sup>10</sup> Art thou not it [the One] which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?

Then in Joshua we read the words of Rahab.

#### Joshua 2:9-10

<sup>9</sup> And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.

<sup>10</sup> For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed.

The crossing of the Red Sea was so great that Isaiah referred to it and even the heathen of Jericho knew about it and it sent chills up their backs as they thought about facing the people whose God could do this. Therefore, we can be sure it was no small thing.

### 1. The Perplexity of the Path

#### Notice Exodus 14:1-2

Israel had started their journey in Ramses and then they went to Succoth. They then went from Succoth to Etham at the edge of the wilderness.

#### Exodus 13:20

<sup>20</sup> And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness.

Now we would expect Israel to go from there into the wilderness to sacrifice to God.

#### Exodus 3:18

<sup>18</sup> And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.

God had even told Moses they would serve God upon Mt. Horeb which was in the southern part of the Sinai Peninsula and that was the very direction they were headed when they stopped at Etham.

#### Exodus 3:12

<sup>12</sup> And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain. [Horeb].

#### Notice Exodus 14:2 again.

Here we see they were told to turn toward Pihahiroth. It was this turn that looks to be a wrong turn. They needed to be on the east side of the Red Sea to get to Horeb and to Canaan. This turn however would put them on the west side of the Red Sea. This path would lead them into Africa.

**Notice Exodus 13:20-14:2**

We need to see within these verses that it was God who both led and instructed Israel to stay on the west side of the Red Sea.

**Application:**

There are a couple of lessons here for our personal lives as well as lessons for the church/body as well.

**a. Sometimes God leads us on a path which human reasoning sees as strange.**

There has never been a believer who followed God and at one time or another has looked around and thought that the direction they were going made no sense. This goes back to Isaiah 55.

**Isaiah 55:8-9**

<sup>8</sup> *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.*

<sup>9</sup> *For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

When we are in these situations, we must encourage ourselves in the fact that we are in the will of God and wisdom of God never makes any mistakes.

**b. When we follow God, we are not left to guess about the direction we are to go.**

The path for Israel was confirmed in two ways.

There was the Pillar of Cloud and Fire and there was the direct command in Exodus 14:1. This lesson is so very important for us to grasp. There will be times in life when we do not know what to do or which way to turn. It is in these times that we do not do GUESS but instead we WAIT. Christians often find themselves in situations where God closes a door and does not open another for a period of time.

**Acts 16:6-10**

<sup>6</sup> *Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia,*

<sup>7</sup> *After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.*

<sup>8</sup> *And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas.*

<sup>9</sup> *And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.*

<sup>10</sup> *And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.*

Here in these verses we see that Paul faced two closed doors at this time in his life. We are not told how long he had to wait until he received clear direction from the vision, but it could have been a while.

God does not lead by a pillar of cloud or fire today, nor do we hear an audible voice, nor do we receive visions. God speaks to us through His Word today and He will give clear direction when He calls upon us to step out in faith especially if it is some kind of "strange" mission.

There are people today who are making strange decisions claiming they are following God, but they have no clear teaching of the Scripture to give proof they are in the will of God. Many times, these people will twist the Scriptures to support their ways. They will pull one or more verses out of context in an attempt to justify what they are doing. Let us be warned not to leave Etham to go to Pihahiroth until we have clear instructions from the Lord. If we do, we may endanger all who travel with us.

## 2. The Proving of the Path.

The turn toward Pihahiroth would be a test for the people and for Moses. God tested Israel many times in their wilderness travels.

### Exodus 16:4

<sup>4</sup> *Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.*

#### a. A test for Moses.

Moses was supposed to be an equipped leader for the people of Israel. But when they made the turn toward Pihahiroth the natural thinking would be that he did not know what he was doing. It would look like Moses was directionally challenged. We can be sure the people of Israel knew the direction to Canaan was not toward the South. They knew they needed to be on the East side of the Red Sea.

Notice the words of F. B. Meyer.

*"The most inexperienced eyes in the multitude must have seen the apparent absurdity of the movement; and loud and deep must have been the murmurs and protestations of the people. 'Is this the way to Canaan? We know better! How dare you presume to lead us, when your very first tactics prove you to be wholly untrustworthy?'"*

What a test this was for Moses. Would he lend his ear to the people or would he walk by faith in what the Lord had revealed to him?

**Application:**

This scene reflects the pressure that pastors have faced through the years as they lead people in the Truth of God's Word. There will always be people who lean more toward the philosophies of the world and when the pastor stays true to the Word of God there is going to be resistance. There are going to be people who grumble and complain because they do not think the pastor knows what he is doing. They question his leadership and his motives. The test for the pastor is if he will continue to stay true to the Word of God or will he conform to the pressure of the people? This brings to mind what Paul wrote to Timothy.

**2 Timothy 4:1-5**

*I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;*

<sup>2</sup> **Preach the word**; *be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.*

<sup>3</sup> *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;*

<sup>4</sup> *And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.*

<sup>5</sup> *But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.*

**b. A test for the people.**

This would be the first test for the Israelites. Would they trust God and His appointed leader, or would they trust human reasoning?

**Application:**

God often takes us through situations to try our faith.

**James 1:2-3**

<sup>2</sup> My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

<sup>3</sup> Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

**1 Peter 1:6-7**

<sup>6</sup> Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

<sup>7</sup> That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

One of the ways in which our faith is tested is when we are led contrary to reasoning. It is easy to follow God when we can see the direction, we are going but when we are led against natural reasoning it truly tests our faith.

**3. The Purpose of the Path.**

There were really two major purposes in the path which Israel was led down.

1. It was to entice Pharaoh.
2. It was to bring honor to God.

**Notice Exodus 14:3-4**

The path which Israel was on would entice Pharaoh to follow and it will be in the Red Sea that he and his military will drown. This will eliminate a formidable enemy of Israel. In all of this the Lord would be honored for His power and wisdom will be on display for all the world to see.

**Conclusion:**

In all of this let us learn to trust the Lord as we follow Him. He has a plan, and, in the plan, He will be honored. Our responsibility is to live by faith.

**Hebrews 10:37-38**

<sup>37</sup> For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

<sup>38</sup> Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.