

"Departure from Egypt"

Part 5

Exodus 12-14

Introduction: Last week in our study of the life of Moses we walked with Israel out of Egypt as they moved toward the wilderness. They started their journey in Rameses and from there they made their way to Succoth. It was at Succoth that they made a turn that would have tested the faith of the entire group as well as Moses. They turned toward Pihahiroth which was a turn that placed them on the East side of the Red Sea going toward Africa, when they needed to be on the West side of the Sea to get to Sinai and to Canaan.

Tonight, in our study we are going to continue to walk with Israel as they cross through the Red Sea.

"Standing on the Edge"

1. The Plan

Notice Exodus 14:5-8

As Israel followed after God and Moses, they had no idea that back in Egypt Pharaoh was planning an attack. After Israel left Pharaoh had a change of mind and he gathered his military together to pursue after Israel. Israel had no way of defending themselves and they were very vulnerable. Pharaoh knew this and therefore we can be sure his intentions were to completely destroy them all. Pharaoh had plans to slaughter Israel. But God also had a plan and His plan was to be glorified and honored in what was about to take place.

Notice Exodus 14:4

God could have stopped Pharaoh was pursuing Israel and He could have destroyed them while they were in Egypt. He chose not to do so but instead He would destroy them in the Red Sea. This would cause Israel to feel great pressure as we shall see but there were several reasons.

- A. God's power would be made known throughout the land because of this event.**

Joshua 2:9-10

*⁹ 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.***

¹⁰ 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.

B. God's power would be an encouragement to His people for their journey.

Application:

As we read about Pharaoh gathering his army to pursue after Israel there is a verse that comes to my mind concerning our enemy and his desire.

1 Peter 5:6-9

⁶ *Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:*

⁷ *Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*

⁸ *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*

⁹ *Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.*

We can be sure Satan was the driving force behind Pharaoh plans to destroy Israel because he knew that through Israel would come the Messiah. So, he convinced Pharaoh to pursue them.

Peter reminds us that our enemy Satan is walking about looking for someone to devour. Satan was doing his best to eliminate the believers in Rome because they were a treat to him. The application for us is that we are the body of Jesus Christ and we are used by God to be a light in the darkness therefore, Satan is going to do all he can to keep us from shining our lights. If he was permitted to do so he would kill each of us. But he is not permitted to do so therefore he will distract us and temp us to go off into the world so that we blend into the darkness instead of living separated and being the light, we are to be. He will temp us with sin so as to destroy our reputation and therefore take away our testimony. He will bring great pressure in order to discourage us in our walk and to rob us of our joy which is supposed to be seen by others.

1 Peter 3:14-15

¹⁴ *But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;*

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

If people are going to ask about our hope, they must be able to see us living in hope. Getting back to our point, Satan has a plan to stop us from being effective for our Lord. Before we leave this point there is yet something else that we need to see.

Notice Exodus 14:8 again.

We are told here that Israel "went out with a high hand". This means they walked out in faith, confidence and courage. They were walking in victory right in front of their enemies. This sent Satan into a rage of anger and it will bring about an attack.

Let us know that when we walk in faith, confidence and courage it is then that Satan becomes very angry. You can be sure that following a victory which God has given to us there will be an attack.

2. The Pressure

Notice Exodus 14:9-10

We must understand that as Israel made their journey still toward the South, they did so with hesitation because of the direction they were going. As they walked, they began to notice a dust cloud approaching from behind. As the cloud came closer, they realized it was Pharaoh's army and he was hot on their trail. As they turned to run, they found themselves on the edge of the Red Sea with no where to go. They were trapped in the middle and they had no way to defend themselves.

Application:

This is a place that we have all been at one time or another and it may just be a place where you are now. You have been following the Lord, walking in His will, just as Israel was. Maybe somethings have changed in your life because He has taken you on a path that you were not expecting. The turn to get on this path made you question what was happening, but you continue to follow Him.

Then one day as you are looking around you see an unsurmountable problem approaching at a very rapid rate. You have nothing in your resources to defend against it so the only option you can think of it to turn and run from the problem. As you turn you realize there is no place to go. You are like Israel as you find yourself on the EDGE.

Let me help you to identify some of the pressures which put us on the EDGE.

- It can be an unexpected illness in you or a loved one which it is impossible to escape from. You want to run away but where would you go? You have no means to fight it and so you are on the EDGE.
- It can be a financial situation and you have no resources to meet the need. Neither can you run because there is no way to escape. You are on the EDGE.
- It can be the loss of a job and now you do not know what to do or where to turn. You cannot find anything that is comparable, so you find yourself standing on the EDGE not knowing what to do.

There are many people living on the EDGE today and they feel helpless. Let me show you Israel's reaction.

Notice Exodus 14:11-12

Moses quickly discovered what these people were like he was leading. Here in these verses that begin to loudly complain, and, in their complaint, there are three points for us to see.

A. They blamed Moses.

Moses was leading them according to the will of God but when there's pressure, people always look for someone to blame. The flesh enjoys lashing out at someone for the pressure which it feels. Let me show you where this comes from.

Genesis 3:9-12

⁹ And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

¹⁰ And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

¹¹ And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

¹² And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

When Adam was feeling the pressure of conviction, he quickly blamed God for giving him the woman. This "blame game" that we all play at times is the result of our sin nature.

This is often seen among church members. Something goes wrong in the church or something goes wrong in someone's family, possibly a spouse or a child turns their back upon the Lord or upon the family and often the people turn and blame the pastor. Few people want to lay the blame on the source which is the Devil or the world or the company they are keeping. The quickly forget the pastor has given many warnings through his

messages and the one who walks away has ignored the warnings, so someone is going to get blamed. Israel's complaining and the blaming of Moses showed their lack of faith. They had little faith in God to rescue them. The same is true for those who want to blame people who are not the source of the problem.

B. They boasted of their past prediction.

Notice Exodus 14:12a

Here we see the arrogance of the flesh. They boasted about their former predictions they had made while in Egypt. But if they were so smart and if they knew what would happen then why did they not chart their own course? Why did they follow after Moses?

Let us learn how poorly the flesh speaks when it feels the pressures of life. The Israelite were playing "armchair quarterbacks". They were saying, "We would never have done it this way! We knew what was going to happen! We knew this would end in tragedy! We should never have followed you Moses!"

As "armchair quarterbacks" what they did not know was the play was not over. The whistle had not blown. They could only see what was before their eyes. They could not see the hand of God waiting to part the Sea and to drown the Egyptians.

Application:

Let us learn from this to keep the flesh on the cross and remind him that he has been rendered powerless by the cross. Our flesh speaks very poorly when he is under pressure. We must trust the Lord and know that when the pressure comes that God has not abandoned us, and He is still at work. Keep in mind the play is not over.

C. They belittled their present circumstances.

Notice Exodus 14:12b

It is sad at how quickly Israel had forgotten the pain of the slavery which they were rescued from. They forgot about the whips used on their backs, they forgot about the babies that had been drowned and they forgot about the sadness of family separation when loved ones died under the heavy hand of the Egyptians.

Application:

Let us learn from this that when the flesh feels pressure it often develops poor vision. It is only faith that can see beyond the darkness of the moment to the brightness which God has promised.

Let us be careful about losing our spiritual vision.

Hebrews 11:13

¹³ *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

3. The Promise

Notice Exodus 14:13-14

The reply of Moses here is wonderful. He gave them 3 precepts.

A. Peace - "Fear ye not"

Let us notice the words of Matthew Henry on this verse:

"It is our duty and interest, when we cannot get out of our troubles, yet to get above our fears, so that they may only serve to quicken our prayers and endeavours, but may not prevail to silence our faith and hope."

Fear is a tool of Satan to confuse the people of the Lord. Let me just say that FEAR BEGINS WHERE FAITH STOPS. When it is permitted to enter the heart, it can do several things:

- **It can turn the believer away from a situation where God has brought them to teach them of His power.**
- **It can paralyze the believer and cause them to not move for the Lord.**
- **It can cause the believer to take a path of compromise in an attempt to escape the situation.**

The point is that fear can have a very negative impact upon God's people.

B. Patience - "Stand still"

Israel was to exercise faith and wait upon the Lord to work His plan. The natural reaction would be to run for your life in this situation. But God's Word was to just stand still. Patience is not something we excel at as believers. We do not enjoy waiting and we especially do not enjoy waiting when we are feeling great pressure. But there are blessings for those who wait.

Isaiah 40:29-31

²⁹ *He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.*

³⁰ *Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:*

³¹ *But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.*

c. Promises - "see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace."

If Israel scattered and fled in fear, they would miss the greatest miracle of the Old Testament.

Application/Conclusion:

When we follow the Lord, we must walk by faith and expect there will be high pressure situations. When these times come let us not allow fear to take over but let us have faith that God has brought us here for a reason and He is going to show us His wonderful power in some way.