

The Parting of the Red Sea

Lesson #5 of the series "Exodus"

1. God heard the cries of his people and rescued them from slavery in Egypt.

"I have heard the groans of the people of Israel, who are now slaves to the Egyptians. And I am well aware of my covenant with them. Therefore, say to the people of Israel: 'I am the LORD. I will free you from your oppression and will rescue you from your slavery in Egypt. I will redeem you with a powerful arm and great acts of judgment.'" -Exodus 6:5-6 (NLT)

Note: God led the Israelites out of slavery and into what seemed like a dead end.

"God led them in a roundabout way through the wilderness toward the Red Sea... He guided them during the day with a pillar of cloud, and he provided light at night with a pillar of fire... the LORD gave these instructions to Moses: 'Order the Israelites to turn back and camp... between Migdol and the sea...Pharaoh will think, The Israelites are confused. They are trapped in the wilderness!'...and he will chase after you. I have planned this in order to display my glory through Pharaoh and his whole army. After this the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD!" -Exodus 13:18,21,14:1-4 (NLT)

Life Application: We must trust that God's plans are bigger and better than our plans.

"My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts,' says the LORD. 'And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine.'" -Isaiah 55:8 (NLT)

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take." -Proverbs 3:5-6 (NLT)

2. A few days after he freed the Israelites from slavery Pharaoh changed his mind.

"When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his officials changed their minds about them and said, 'What have we done? We have let the Israelites go and have lost their services!' So he had his chariot made ready and took his army with him... all Pharaoh's horses and chariots, horsemen and troops--pursued the Israelites and overtook them as they camped by the sea..." -Exodus 14:5-9 (NIV)

Note: When the Israelites saw Pharaoh pursuing them they panicked and turned against Moses.

"As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up and saw them—Egyptians! Coming at them! They were totally afraid. They cried out in terror to GOD. They told Moses, 'Weren't the cemeteries large enough in Egypt so that you had to take us out here in the wilderness to die? ...Back in Egypt didn't we tell you this would happen? Didn't we tell you, 'Leave us alone here in Egypt—we're better off as slaves in Egypt than as corpses in the wilderness.' Moses spoke to the people: 'Don't be afraid. Stand firm and watch GOD do his work of salvation for you today. Take a good look at the Egyptians today for you're never going to see them again. GOD will fight the battle for you. And you? You keep your mouths shut!'" -Exodus 14:10-14 (MSG)

Life Application: We must choose to trust God rather than our circumstances.

"Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand." -Isaiah 41:10 (NLT)

"God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." -2 Timothy 1:7 (NKJV)

Life Application: There is a time to pray and a time to obey.

"Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Why are you crying out to me? Tell the people to get moving! Pick up your staff and raise your hand over the sea. Divide the water so the Israelites can walk through the middle of the sea on dry ground.'" -Exodus 14:15-16 (NLT)

“If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you... But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.”

-James 1:5-7 (NLT)

3. God led the Israelites through the Red Sea on dry ground.

“Then Moses raised his hand over the sea, and the LORD opened up a path through the water with a strong east wind. The wind blew all that night, turning the seabed into dry land. So the people of Israel walked through the middle of the sea on dry ground, with walls of water on each side!” -Exodus 14: 21-22 (NLT)

Life Application: There is no problem we face that is too difficult for God.

“O Sovereign LORD! You made the heavens and earth by your strong hand and powerful arm. Nothing is too hard for you!” -Jeremiah 32:17 (NLT)

Note: The Lord is a warrior who gives his people victory.

“...all of Pharaoh’s horses, chariots, and charioteers—chased them into the middle of the sea. But just before dawn the LORD... threw their forces into total confusion. He twisted their chariot wheels, making their chariots difficult to drive. ‘Let’s get out of here—away from these Israelites!’ the Egyptians shouted. ‘The LORD is fighting for them against Egypt!’ When all the Israelites had reached the other side, the LORD said to Moses, ‘Raise your hand over the sea again. Then the waters will rush back and cover the Egyptians and their chariots and charioteers.’ So as the sun began to rise, Moses raised his hand over the sea, and the water rushed back into its usual place. The Egyptians tried to escape, but the LORD swept them into the sea...Of all the Egyptians who had chased the Israelites into the sea, not a single one survived...Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the LORD: ‘I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; he has hurled both horse and rider into the sea. The LORD is my strength and my song; he has given me victory. The LORD is a warrior; Yahweh is his name!’” -Exodus 14:23-15:2 (NLT)

Life Application: We have victory through Jesus!

“If God is for us, who can ever be against us? ...Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? ...No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us. And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God’s love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God’s love... indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” -Romans 8:31,35-39 (NLT)

Connect Group Questions

To prepare for this week's meeting, take some time to focus on the following questions and write out a few brief answers. Be prepared to share them with your group.

My Story

1. Looking back at your notes from this week's message on the parting of the Red Sea was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?
2. Have you ever hit a "dead end" in your life? What happened? How did you respond? Did you talk to God about your situation? If so, what did you say?
3. What is your greatest fear? Have you ever had to face it head on? If so, what happened?
4. Have you ever been disappointed with God? Why? Why not?

Going Deeper

1. What do the following passages teach us about obedience?
 - 1 Samuel 15:22-23
 - James 1:5-7
 - John 14:21
 - James 4:17
2. How did the following people in the Bible respond when faced with terrifying circumstances?
 - Shadrach, Meshach & Abednego vs. Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 3:1-18)
 - The people of Israel vs. Pharaoh (Exodus 14:5-14)
 - David vs. Goliath (1 Samuel 17:45-46)
3. What do the following verses say about overcoming worry and fear?
 - Deuteronomy 31:6
 - Psalm 91
 - 1 Peter 5:7
 - Philippians 4:6-7
 - Psalm 34:4-5

Life Application

1. Read Romans 8:31-39 and the following lyrics to *Victory in Jesus!*

"I heard an old, old story. How a savior came from glory. How he gave his life on Calvary to save a wretch like me. I heard about His groaning, of his precious blood's atoning. Then I repented of my sin and won the victory.

Oh, victory in Jesus, my savior, forever. He sought me and bought me with his redeeming blood. He loved me 'ere I knew him and all my love is due him. He plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood."

What does "victory in Jesus" look like? Do you have it? How do you know? How do you get it?
2. You invite your next door neighbor to worship with you at Centerpoint. She declines by saying, "Church just isn't for me. I see no need to worship a god that allowed my husband to die five years ago." How do you respond? Is it reasonable to expect that people who follow the Lord will never face hardship, trials, or pain? Why? Why not? (See Romans 5:3-5)
3. What fears are people dealing with in your family? ...in your neighborhood? ...in our church? How do people respond to these fears? What are the consequences / results? As Christians how can we keep fears from controlling us? How can we help others?

4. React to the following quotations:

“Fear stifles our thinking and actions. It creates indecisiveness that results in stagnation. I have known talented people who procrastinate indefinitely rather than risk failure. Lost opportunities cause erosion of confidence, and the downward spiral begins.” -Charles Stanley

“The first duty of man is to conquer fear; he must get rid of it, he cannot act till then.” -Thomas Carlyle

“Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment that something else is more important than fear. The brave may not live forever, but the cautious do not live at all.” -Meg Cabot .

“Security is a superstition. It does not exist in nature, nor do the children of men as a whole experience it. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure or nothing.” -Helen Keller