

⁸ And the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great deeds of terror, with signs and wonders. Deuteronomy 26:8 (ESV) That is Moses' own summary of what had happened to this point in our study. This great mixed multitude was following the Angel in the cloud and boldly went out in plain sight, even armed for battle. The LORD had defeated the gods of Egypt. Pharaoh and his officials drove them out of the land, just as God had foretold. (Exodus 6:1)

The locations of the names of the places are very uncertain today. We can't be sure of the exact route or of where they crossed, though there is a fascinating video of a land bridge in the Red Sea with coral encrusted chariot wheels on the ocean floor. One problem is the name "Red Sea" in Hebrew, *Yom Suph*, means Sea of Reeds. Wherever it was, it was location that appeared as if this great band of refugees were cornered.

When we were redeemed, we may have thought we would step right into a land of milk and honey. Instead God led us into a wilderness to build our faith. Sometimes it even looks like He has led us to our doom. "I was trying to follow You, God. Now look where You have led me!" We don't realize that this is the best place for our faith to grow.

God predicted, *³ For Pharaoh will say of the people of Israel, 'They are wandering in the land; the wilderness has shut them in.'* As I have explained before, God is outside of time. He knows our thoughts before we think them. (Psalm 139:2) If He says it will happen, then it will.

God went on to tell Moses, *⁴ And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, and the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD.*" One last time, God will harden the heart of this unrepentant king. He gave in to God's demand, but not because he was yielding his heart. He was afraid of the consequences.

Later, Nehemiah will tell us that in spite of all the signs and wonders, Pharaoh acted arrogantly against God's children. (Nehemiah 9:10) God was making a name for Himself by humbling one of the proudest men on earth. We've seen how Pharaoh is a warning to all prideful men. Isaiah tells us that a day is coming when every prideful and lofty man will be brought low, and the LORD alone will be exalted. (Isaiah 2:11) That is good news to the humble children of God, but ought to strike fear into the heart of every prideful man and woman.

Remember that definition of insanity? Doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. Well, here goes Pharaoh again. *⁵ When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the mind of Pharaoh and his servants*

Commented [Paul Wall1]: Exodus 6:1 (ESV)
1 But the LORD said to Moses, "Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for with a strong hand he will send them out, and with a strong hand he will drive them out of his land."

Commented [Paul Wall2]: Psalms 139:2 (ESV)
2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar.

Commented [Paul Wall3]: Nehemiah 9:10 (ESV)
10 and performed signs and wonders against Pharaoh and all his servants and all the people of his land, for you knew that they acted arrogantly against our fathers. And you made a name for yourself, as it is to this day.

Commented [Paul Wall4]: Isaiah 2:11 (ESV)
11 The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, and the lofty pride of men shall be humbled, and the LORD alone will be exalted in that day.

was changed toward the people, and they said, "What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?" "What did we do?" You did the only sane thing you could do! You gave in to all-powerful God's demand. You recognized He could wipe you out if you persisted. Pharaoh had a temporary lapse of sanity, but that has passed.

It happens to us too. We give the Holy Spirit a chance to speak to our heart and do something by faith instead of by sight. Then we start reasoning out our action and trying to make sense of it and decide it wasn't a good decision. "Why did I pledge to support Young Life?" OR "Why did I say I would go on that mission trip?" We reason our way out of the blessing of walking by faith. (Hebrews 11:6)

Pharaoh and his officials started thinking about losing all that labor and decided they had made a mistake. They called the cavalry divisions up and headed out after the Israelites.

¹⁰ When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they feared greatly. And the people of Israel cried out to the LORD. They had just seen God deliver them and prove the gods of Egypt were powerless, but they were afraid. My guess is that we would have been as well. They had weapons, but the Egyptians have chariots and horses and are trained soldiers. Women and children might die in the confrontation. On top of all that, there was nowhere to flee. It would have to be a head on confrontation. The impossible situation is the opportunity for great lessons of faith.

"Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt?" We'll hear this repeated again when things get difficult. (Exodus 17:3) It's the expanded version of "Why me God?" "I gave my life to God and now I have to deal with – ". You fill in the blank. Why do we think following God will be easy? The Bible never says that it will be. We are to give thanks in every situation because we know God is for us. (Romans 8:28) What they couldn't see in the midst of their whining was that this predicament was actually going to finish off their enemies. (Psalm 53:5) In fact, it would become a point in their history that they will always look back on as very special, for God is about to reveal His greatness again. (Ezekiel 20:9)

It is a hard lesson to learn because it goes against our natural senses. Bottom line is this, where is your faith placed? In what do you trust? Pharaoh trusted in his chariots and horses. (Psalm 20:7) But what Pharaoh can't see, and what the Israelites aren't seeing is the invisible realm. ¹⁷ *The chariots of God are twice ten thousand, thousands upon thousands; the Lord is among them...* Psalms 68:17a (ESV) There was the frightened servant of Elisha who saw an army after the two of them. ¹⁷ *Then Elisha prayed and said, "O LORD, please open his eyes that he*

Commented [Paul Wall5]: Hebrews 11:6 (ESV)
6 And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

Commented [Paul Wall6]: Exodus 17:3 (ESV)
3 But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?"

Commented [Paul Wall7]: Exodus 17:3 (ESV)
3 But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?"

Commented [Paul Wall8]: Psalms 53:5 (ESV)
5 There they are, in great terror, where there is no terror! For God scatters the bones of him who encamps against you; you put them to shame, for God has rejected them.

Commented [Paul Wall9]: Ezekiel 20:9 (ESV)
9 But I acted for the sake of my name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations among whom they lived, in whose sight I made myself known to them in bringing them out of the land of Egypt.

Commented [Paul Wall10]: Psalms 20:7 (ESV)
7 Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.

may see." So the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. 2 Kings 6:17 (ESV)

What is your battle? What are the odds? If it's God's battle, why are you fearful? Remember Gideon with his 300 against a multitude of Midianites, or Jehoshaphat against that confederation of armies? (2Chronicles 20:1-2) Or how about David versus Goliath (1Samuel 17:4-7), or Jonathan and his armor bearer against the Philistines? (1Samuel 14:6) **The odds don't matter if it is God's battle.** God is always the superior force. May the force be with you or maybe we should say, "May you be with the force", because He always wins! Even when it looks like we lose, we win, for we are more than conquerors! (Romans 8:37)

The people then reminded Moses of their sin, as if they were right when they told Moses to leave them alone. ¹² *Is not this what we said to you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness."* Obviously, they haven't yet grasped all that God had done to liberate them. They couldn't blame God because they desperately needed Him, so they blamed His messenger. They'll resort to this numerous times. (Numbers 16:3; 12:1) They did the right thing in calling out to God. But they did the wrong thing in blaming His servant Moses. That was rebellion against God. (Psalm 106:7-8) *They were crying out for God to save them, and He was saving them through Moses!*

Yes, this too is a tendency of fallen man. I frequently hear the complaints about pastors. "Why don't they preach on this or that? Why aren't they for that or against this?" No man is perfect, but maybe the humble question should be this, "If God's ordained leaders are or aren't led the same way I'd like to see them go, then what am I missing? What is my blind spot?"

If there is one thing they should have feared, it wasn't the army of Egypt, but the LORD. He is the One that just demonstrated His power over and over. He's the One that is leading through Moses. They were spared from many of the plagues even though they were guilty of many of the same things as the Egyptians. (Isaiah 8:13)

Now listening to this amazing response from Moses. Sounds to me like he just got a Holy Spirit download. ¹³ *And Moses said to the people, "Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again."*

Moses was encouraging them to have faith in God, not to fear man, and stand firm and see God's salvation. This is exactly what we need to tell ourselves and remind one another when the trials of life overwhelm us. **Don't fear man or the situation.** God is on the throne of heaven. Worry and fear won't help. Perfect

Commented [Paul Wall11]: 2 Chronicles 20:1-2 (ESV)
1 After this the Moabites and Ammonites, and with them some of the Meunites, came against Jehoshaphat for battle.

2 Some men came and told Jehoshaphat, "A great multitude is coming against you from Edom, from beyond the sea; and, behold, they are in Hazazon-tamar" (that is, Engedi).

Commented [Paul Wall12]: 1 Samuel 17:4-7 (ESV)

4 And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.

5 He had a helmet of bronze on his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of bronze.

6 And he had bronze armor on his legs, and a javelin of bronze slung between his shoulders.

7 The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron. And his shield-bearer went before him.

Commented [Paul Wall13]: 1 Samuel 14:6 (ESV)

6 Jonathan said to the young man who carried his armor, "Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised. It may be that the LORD will work for us, for nothing can hinder the LORD from saving by many or by few."

Commented [Paul Wall14]: Romans 8:37 (ESV)

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

Commented [Paul Wall15]: Numbers 16:3 (ESV)

3 They assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron and said to them, "You have gone too far! For all in the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?"

Commented [Paul Wall16]: Numbers 12:1 (ESV)

1 Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married, for he had married a Cushite woman.

Commented [Paul Wall17]: Psalms 106:7-8 (ESV)

7 Our fathers, when they were in Egypt, did not consider your wondrous works; they did not remember the abundance of your steadfast love, but rebelled by the Sea, at the Red Sea.

8 Yet he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make known his mighty power.

Commented [Paul Wall18]: Isaiah 8:13 (ESV)

13 But the LORD of hosts, him you shall regard as holy. Let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.

love casts out fear. (1John 4:18) Hold your ground in faith. Believe God, and wait and watch for Him to act. They had been redeemed from Israel by the hand of God. Now they must realize that their wilderness journey is just as dependent on God. Your salvation was all of God. Your journey is by the grace of God as well!

Commented [Paul Wall19]: 1 John 4:18 (ESV)
18 There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.

But there was one more word of advice from God. *14 The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.* Let God do the fighting. Ask Him to defeat the enemy. When you don't know what to say, be silent. If you are tempted to blurt out all your complaints and blame someone, just be silent. (2Chronicles 20:17) Watch God work.

Commented [Paul Wall20]: 2 Chronicles 20:17 (ESV)
17 You will not need to fight in this battle. Stand firm, hold your position, and see the salvation of the LORD on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.' Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed. Tomorrow go out against them, and the LORD will be with you."

15 The LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. 16 Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground. "What are you crying about Moses, get the people moving! Part the sea!" And then God promised the Egyptians would follow them and be drowned. Twice in the chapter we are told that they will know that *"I am the LORD."*

People complain that God doesn't make Himself plainer, more easily seen. When He does they just excuse it and rebel against Him, which makes them even more accountable on Judgment Day. (Matthew 12:36-37)

Commented [Paul Wall21]: Matthew 12:36-37 (ESV)
36 I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, 37 for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

The wind blew and they began to pass through the sea. When they saw God at work again, their fear left. Another amazing thing helped them to have faith. (Hebrews 11:29) The cloud that had led them went around behind them and separated them from the Egyptians. It was utter darkness again for the Egyptians, while it lit their way through the Red Sea. (NIV interpretation of the wording) This Angel who is in the cloud, and who is the Presence of the LORD, is in my opinion none other than Jesus. (Colossians 1:15) He is our light and our salvation. Whom shall we fear! (Psalm 27:1-2)

Commented [Paul Wall22]: Hebrews 11:29 (ESV)
29 By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as if on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned.

Commented [Paul Wall23]: Colossians 1:15 (ESV)
15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

The last of them arrived on the far shore at dawn. The cloud lifted and let the Egyptians pursue them. What is utterly amazing is that they were belligerent enough to go between those walls of water! (Psalm 78:13) *23 The Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.* It reminds me of a quote from Solomon. *3 This is an evil in all that is done under the sun... the hearts of the children of man are full of evil, and madness is in their hearts while they live, and after that they go to the dead.* Ecclesiastes 9:3 (ESV) Madness was surely in the heart of Pharaoh. There is no other explanation. He was going to recapture them or die. Man versus God. Pharaoh was telling God, "They are mine! And You can't have them!"

Commented [Paul Wall24]: Psalms 27:1-2 (ESV)
1 OF DAVID. The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
2 When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall.

Commented [Paul Wall25]: Psalms 78:13 (ESV)
13 He divided the sea and let them pass through it, and made the waters stand like a heap.

God knew this was Pharaoh's heart from the beginning. God raised him up for this very event, to show through him the stubbornness of man and the greatness of God. (Romans 9:17)

²⁴ And in the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw the Egyptian forces into a panic, ²⁵ clogging their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily. And the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from before Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians." Something happened as they got out in the middle of that sea. The wheels began to freeze up (LXX) or fall off (Hebrew). They realized that of the two options, catch the Israelites or die, the latter was becoming more likely. By then it was too late.

God told Moses to again stretch out his hand over the sea. *²⁸ The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen; of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained.* The army of man followed Pharaoh, and the army of God followed Moses.

⁶ At your rebuke, O God of Jacob, both rider and horse lay stunned. ⁷ But you, you are to be feared! Who can stand before you when once your anger is roused? ⁸ From the heavens you uttered judgment; the earth feared and was still, ⁹ when God arose to establish judgment, to save all the humble of the earth. Selah ¹⁰ Surely the wrath of man shall praise you... Psalms 76:6-10a (ESV)

What an incredible night! It was the baptism of Israel. (1Corinthians 10:2) It was another opportunity to believe and allow their heart to be changed. *³¹ Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.*

The Scriptures declare that God did this for four reasons. God despised Pharaoh and his army. Man that rejects God after God reveals Himself over and over and over is a pompous fool. (Psalm 14:1) That kind of a person delights in leading others to rebel against their Creator. Nothing can be done to turn them. God despises those given over to evil. (Psalm 7:12-13)

God also did this because He loved Israel. Even though they murmured and doubted. He set His love upon them because of Abraham and the promises He made to their forefathers. (Psalm 86:13; 136:13; Deuteronomy 7:7-8) Remember that you have been grafted into this tree and become a recipient of the promises because of your faith in Christ Jesus. (Romans 11:17)

Probably the most important reason is that He was revealing His name. It was for His name's sake. This event would shake the surrounding nations. The Egyptians will know He is the LORD. (Ezekiel 20:9) The Apostle Paul tells us God

Commented [Paul Wall26]: Romans 9:17 (ESV)
17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth."

Commented [Paul Wall27]: 1 Corinthians 10:2 (ESV)
2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,

Commented [Paul Wall28]: Psalms 14:1 (ESV)
1 TO THE CHOIRMASTER. OF DAVID. The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds, there is none who does good.

Commented [Paul Wall29]: Psalms 7:12-13 (ESV)
12 If a man does not repent, God will whet his sword;
13 he has bent and readied his bow;
13 he has prepared for him his deadly weapons, making his arrows fiery shafts.

Commented [Paul Wall30]: Psalms 86:13 (ESV)
13 For great is your steadfast love toward me; you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.

Commented [Paul Wall31]: Psalms 136:13 (ESV)
13 to him who divided the Red Sea in two, for his steadfast love endures forever;

Commented [Paul Wall32]: Deuteronomy 7:7-8 (ESV)
7 It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples,
8 but it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Commented [Paul Wall33]: Romans 11:17 (ESV)
17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree,

Commented [Paul Wall34]: Ezekiel 20:9 (ESV)
9 But I acted for the sake of my name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations among whom they lived, in whose sight I made myself known to them in bringing them out of the land of Egypt.

raised up Pharaoh so that the name of the LORD would be proclaimed in all the earth.

God also wanted the riches of His glory to be revealed to us. (Romans 9:23) That is difficult for us to understand, but think of it like this: glory is the revelation of the heart of God. In our passage today He showed His heart is to deliver those who cry out to Him, even when they aren't perfect. His heart is to judge the arrogant oppressor. His heart is to show us His saving power that we might put our trust in Him. (Romans 10:13)

Commented [Paul Wall35]: Romans 9:23 (ESV) 23 in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory—

Commented [Paul Wall36]: Romans 10:13 (ESV) 13 For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

One day over 1500 years later, the disciples of Jesus sailed into a storm. They had to wake Jesus up because they feared they might drown. Jesus rebuked the wind and the waves and there was a great calm. The disciples *marveled, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?"* Matthew 8:27 (ESV) What sort of man? A man like Moses, only infinitely greater, who gives orders to the winds and the waves. A man to whom we are commanded to listen. (Deuteronomy 18:15) A man who leads the rebellious followers that He loves to the Promised Land and calls down the judgment of God on those who consistently resist Him.

Commented [Paul Wall37]: Deuteronomy 18:15 (ESV) 15 "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen—

Just as He led them out of their dilemma and saved them, so He will save us if we will cry out to Him. Just as He brought victory when they calmly obeyed and walked in faith with their eyes on Him, so will He bring us through to victory if we will do the same.

Just as the redemption from Egypt was followed by the victory over their enemies in the sea, sealing forever their deliverance, so the redemption of Jesus on the cross was followed by resurrection. Resurrection sealed forever the victory over the enemy of our soul. Our salvation has been by grace through faith and now our journey continues the same way. Every step is a step of faith by the grace of God.

Questions:

- 1 What encouraged Pharaoh to go after the Israelites?
- 2 Relate Isaiah 2:4 to Pharaoh and to us.
- 3 Describe the emotional roller coaster of the Hebrews. Relate.
- 4 Was the battle lopsided? Psalm 68:17 What about ours?
- 5 Who was fighting the battle? Who fights your battles?
- 6 What were the people asked to do?
- 7 How many warnings did Pharaoh have?
- 8 Why did God raise up Pharaoh?
- 9 Why did God rescue the Israelites?
- 10 How does this bring us to Jesus? Matthew 10:17; Deuteronomy 18:15

