

EXODUS

Way Maker

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sermon study summary

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INTRODUCTION

The story of God parting the Red Sea illustrates an important principle. God delights in revealing Himself to His children, but few people have a life-changing encounter with God when life is going well. Encounters with God often happen in the midst of life's dilemmas, when you are trapped in a tight corner. It is then that you are likely to encounter God's character in the most profound way, and God will use your dilemma to reveal His splendor and glory.

When the Israelites left Egypt, God deliberately led them in the opposite direction from the Promised Land. This situation was the perfect setting for God to demonstrate His glory, splendor and majesty. Through delivering them, God's name would be praised forever.

From a military point of view, God's strategy was foolish. Just when the Israelites were dreaming of starting a new life in the Promised Land, God hardened Pharaoh's heart and he pursued them. They were caught between Egypt's army and the Red Sea. The Israelites were powerless to fix their problem and they needed divine intervention. They were terrified and cried out to God in their distress. Humanly speaking, there was no way out. But God had ordained this dilemma to teach them a lesson they would never forget.

Situations like this are fertile ground for a God-encounter. God may permit fiery trials, events and circumstances to teach you to depend upon God like never before. The purpose of the Red Sea experience is to teach you, when you can't find your way out, to look to God! Let Him fight on your behalf. God will make a way! He is a Way Maker!

Moses told the people to be still and let the LORD fight for them. By faith the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, one step of faith after another. Lo and behold, the waters parted and God made a way for the Israelites to walk on dry ground. Then the pillar of cloud, the visible sign of God's presence, moved from the front, leading and guiding the Israelites, to the rear, shielding them from their enemies. And the Egyptians drowned in the sea. Not one of them survived!

When you are going through a crisis, it's hard to be still. Whatever enemies you may be staring at, let God take them on! If He is fighting for you, then you have nothing to fear. Be still, wait for direction from the Lord, then obey God even in the face of chaos. Victory will be yours.

Without faith it is impossible to please God. Faith is utmost confidence in God and His character. Your faith becomes a channel for God to work. Believe that God will stay true to His promises. As a follower of Christ you have an enemy who, like a roaring lion, seeks to devour you. If God is not in front of you, He will be behind you, shielding you from your enemies. His presence comes in between. He becomes your shield.

The Red Sea Crossing became a historic marker, a milestone. The OT writers kept going back to this event over and over to highlight God's miraculous powers against seemingly impossible odds! Looking back, the Israelites could see that their dilemma served as an opportunity to see God's hand.

What dilemma are you facing today? Your situation is a perfect opportunity for God to display His mighty power—a platform for God to display His glory. God is a Way Maker. Let Him fight your battles! Let Him make a way for you! Your faith will never be the same.



EXODUS

sermon study guide

IN – PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. What is your favourite turning point in a movie or book?
2. How difficult is it for you to accept the Bible account of the Red Sea crossing? Explain.

UP – PURSUE GOD

3. Read Exodus 14:1-4, 10-12. Why did God allow the Israelites to be trapped between the Egyptians and the sea? What was the Israelites' response when they saw the Egyptians coming after them and why?
4. Refer to Exodus 14:13-30. God responded to the Israelites' cries with what commands? With what actions? At the end of the story, what was the Israelites' response to God making a way (verse 31)?

OUT – PURSUE MISSION

5. When God asks you to take a step of faith, what might stop you from taking it? What does Exodus 14 teach us about how to face dilemmas?
6. See Exodus 14:4, 31. Has there been a time when you allowed God to fight for you? How did He display His glory and power? Share your story to encourage others.

For Personal Reflection / Prayer:

What dilemma are you facing today? Are you overwhelmed by your problem? It could be an opportunity for God to display His mighty power. Allow Him to fight your battle.

THE WORD (NIV)

Exodus 14:1-4 Then the Lord said to Moses, ² "Tell the Israelites to turn back and encamp near Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea. They are to encamp by the sea, directly opposite Baal Zephon. ³ Pharaoh will think, 'The Israelites are wandering around the land in confusion, hemmed in by the desert.' ⁴ And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them. But I will gain glory for myself through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord." So the Israelites did this.

vv. 10-12 ¹⁰ As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the Lord. ¹¹ They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? ¹² 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!"

vv. 13-16 ¹³ Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. ¹⁴ The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still."

¹⁵ Then the Lord said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on. ¹⁶ Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground.

vv. 19-20 ¹⁹ Then the angel of God, who had been traveling in front of Israel's army, withdrew and went behind them. The pillar of cloud also moved from in front and stood behind them, ²⁰ coming between the armies of Egypt and Israel. Throughout the night the cloud brought darkness to the one side and light to the other side; so neither went near the other all night long.

vv. 23-25 ²³ The Egyptians pursued them, and all Pharaoh's horses and chariots and horsemen followed them into the sea. ²⁴ During the last watch of the night the Lord looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud at the Egyptian army and threw it into confusion. ²⁵ He jammed the wheels of their chariots so that they had difficulty driving. And the Egyptians said, "Let's get away from the Israelites! The Lord is fighting for them against Egypt."

vv. 29-31 ²⁹ But the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left. ³⁰ That day the Lord saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. ³¹ And when the Israelites saw the mighty hand of the Lord displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant.

This week's writers: Elsa Henderson, Jemimah Ong, Jared Harrison and Jorel Quemuel

