

Message #26**Exodus 14:15-31**

This is a very famous story that most of the world knows something about. Movies have been made about this event. This is the famous story of the parting of the Red Sea. The Red Sea is parted, the Israelites are saved and the Egyptians drown. This is one of the greatest stories in all of history and in the Bible.

The sad reality is most people in the world do not know the God of the story. In fact, most have rejected Him and His Son. Even the nation Israel, who experienced this great deliverance firsthand, does not know God and did reject His Son.

Let us remember the context. God has backed Israel up to the Red Sea. She is backed into a corner and is boxed in. There is nowhere for her to run, nowhere for her to go and her only hope is to turn to God and trust that He will protect her.

The nation Israel was about to get a firsthand look at the presence and power of God and the end result would be she would fear Him and believe in Him and also believe in Moses, God's servant.

GOD'S SOVEREIGN DESTRUCTION OF THE EGYPTIANS AT THE RED SEA CAUSED HIS PEOPLE TO FEAR THE LORD AND BELIEVE IN THE LORD AND ALSO FEAR AND BELIEVE IN HIS SERVANT MOSES.

When God wipes out an enemy, it is cause for great rejoicing. This is the final story of Exodus in which the Egyptians are connected to Israel. After this event, Israel has no more contact or problems with the Egyptians.

There are nine key Exodus realities we want to see here:

EXODUS REALITY #1 – God told Moses to tell Israel to go forward. 14:15

Now as we mentioned last week, if you tell Israel to go forward from where she is camped, it would take probably a minimum of 2-3 hours to break camp, pack animals and get ready to move.

While you are doing that it would appear to you and to the human eye that Israel is trapped. She is backed up to the Red Sea. She cannot outrun chariots and she cannot outfight the Egyptian army. So escaping would initially appear to be an impossibility.

When God tells Israel to start going forward toward the Red Sea, she had no way of seeing how God could deliver her. The Red Sea presented a huge obstacle for Israel. This is not some little stream that you may just jump across. We don't know the exact spot where Israel was, but the minimum distance across at one spot is 6 miles and many speculate it is 10-12 miles across.

When God gives this command to “go forward” there are no ships or barges ready to load the nation, which means God is going to have to make it possible for the nation to go forward. This is not some cult assignment to commit national suicide by drowning. So when this command was given, Israel would start breaking up camp and move toward the sea.

Things that are obstacles for us are nothing for God. If God says “go forward,” then He will make it possible to go. When the Rapture occurs and we hear “come up here,” God will make it possible for us to go.

EXODUS REALITY #2 – God told Moses what he was to do. 14:16

This must have been an amazing moment for Moses. Moses was to lift up his staff and stretch out his hand over the sea and the sea would divide and the children of Israel could walk right through the midst of it on dry ground.

So God was not just going to give them some difficult or strenuous escape route. He was not going to make her slosh through water, or wade out into the sea in some fording fashion or try to float or swim; God was going to give her completely dry ground on which she could walk.

Now we know that a strong wind does dry the ground fast, but we are talking here about an ocean bottom. God was going to dry this so that Israel could cross on a dry road.

EXODUS REALITY #3 – God told Moses what He would do to the Egyptians . 14:17-18

God said that He would harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they would go in after them, and Pharaoh and all of his army with all of his chariots and horsemen would drown and the entire Egyptian world would know that the God of Israel is the God to honor. So this Exodus would save the Israelites and destroy the Egyptians and God would be honored by both.

The hardening of one’s heart causes a person to think in a completely irrational way. So if one’s heart is hardened when it comes to salvation—they know they are a sinner and yet they would rather trust in themselves for salvation than Jesus Christ who was raised from the dead. It is just not rational. If you are a sinner you cannot save yourself. None of the people we have buried can save us. Only Jesus Christ can save us, but people whose hearts are hard do not think rationally.

By the way, this verse clearly proves that God will be honored by heaven and God will be honored by hell. Just as Paul said in Romans, “what if God although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction” (Rom. 9:22).

EXODUS REALITY #4 – God’s angel moved between the Israelites and the Egyptians.
14:19-20

Now the angel of God, who is none other than Jesus Christ, had been directing Israel by that pillar cloud and pillar of fire.

So the angel moved and went behind the nation preventing the Egyptians from getting at the Israelites on the shore. So God became a wall of protection for His people.

The people needed some time to pack up and get moving and also time to cross the sea. This cloud gave them that time.

What this cloud did was bring darkness to the enemy side and light to the Israelite side. If you were part of the Egyptian world, you were in darkness; but if you were part of the family of God, you were in the light.

EXODUS REALITY #5 – Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. **14:21**

When Moses did this, God used an east wind to blow and part the sea and make the sea into dry land. The wind belongs to God and He used His own wind to do His bidding. He used that same east wind earlier to bring that plague of locusts to the land (Ex. 10:13). In that case, the east wind led to the destruction of the crops. In this case, the east wind would lead to a destruction of the Egyptians.

God literally created a massive highway right through the middle of the Red Sea for Israel to escape.

EXODUS REALITY #6 – Israel crossed through the Red Sea. **14:22**

Now some have criticized this passage by saying an east wind would only be able to dry a marshy area, but carefully notice what is said in **verse 22**; they are looking at walls of sea waters on the right and left. Now the Hebrew word “wall” (*homah*) speaks of a very large and massive wall. This word is used some 133 times in the O.T. and, as Douglas Stuart points out, “without exception they indicate massive high walls” (*Exodus*, p. 342). In fact, Stuart also observes that city walls were a minimum of 20 feet high, so this is not some little path through a shallow pond.

So this cannot be just referring to an eastern wind that dries a little marshy or muddy area. This eastern wind created sea walls and a dry highway channel between those walls.

As they were crossing, if they looked to their left, they saw a wall of water and if they looked to their right, they saw a wall of water. We do not know how wide the highway actually was, but we may assume it was quite wide to enable about 2 million people to cross. Now apparently they crossed all through the night (**14:20**).

God does provide enablement to carry out His will.

EXODUS REALITY #7 – Egyptians chase the Israelites out into the sea. **14:23-25**

This is a big mistake and it is totally and completely insane. In light of all the Egyptians had seen God do, this is a very foolish thing to do. But the reason she is doing this is because God is turning their minds to do something that is totally irrational. In the wee hours of the morning, the Egyptians started pursuing Israel out into the sea on the highway.

She must have reasoned the cloud that has been blocking us has lifted, so let's go get them. Not only did they chase them on foot, they are driving their horses and chariots right out into the sea.

God looked down on the Egyptian army from His High Pillar and Tower position at morning watch—3 A.M.-6 A.M. (v. 24)—and caused such confusion that the chariot wheels started to swerve to the point that they could not even drive. God actually started binding up the chariot wheels and the soldiers could not control them.

The logical assumption is that the sea floor was becoming soft and muddy and the narrow, metal covered chariot wheels bearing the weight of one or two men started bogging down. The horses couldn't pull their own weight plus the dead weight of a fully loaded chariot. They were stuck.

Now the Egyptians realized they are in trouble and they say, “let us flee from Israel for the LORD is fighting for them against the Egyptians” (14:25).

God is so sovereign that He can cause accidents.

EXODUS REALITY #8 – God told Moses to stretch out his hand and the sea returned and all the Egyptians drowned. **14:26-28**

The Israelites could now look back and see what was happening. The waters that they had walked through were about to go back to their original form. Moses raised his hand and the sea returned back to its original spot. The roadway was wide enough for all of Israel to see this, so this must have taken a few moments to get all of the water back to its original ocean form.

According to Asaph's Psalm 77:16-20, thunder was roaring, lightning was flashing, and the rain was torrential and the earth was shaking. This must have been a frightening moment for the Egyptians. It has been a smooth, quiet crossing for the Israelites, but not the Egyptians.

According to **verse 28** no one escaped. All of the Egyptians drowned. Now again this proves they are crossing a sea, not some marshy bog. This would lend itself to a great distance because some of the Egyptians probably could swim, but none of them could swim their way out of this.

Now we may assume that some of the military men were swimmers.

The ancient Greeks were known to teach their navy men how to swim and we may assume that some of these Egyptians knew how to swim. But they are so far out in the sea and so overtaken by the water that none survived. By the way, the water is warm. The Red Sea is known for its warm water. Water temperatures normally hover around 80 degrees, so no one would die of hypothermia. They all died by drowning.

EXODUS REALITY #9 – God destroyed the Egyptians and God saved Israel. **14:29-31**

According to **verse 30**, Israel saw a bunch of dead bodies washing up to the seashore. But that is not all she saw. According to **verse 31**, she saw the great power of God.

She got to see it and experience it firsthand. As a result, she feared the LORD and she believed in Moses.

By the way, why did God do this for Israel? Why did He save her? She didn't deserve it. He did it because He is faithful to His Word. He promised to save this nation and He promised to take her to a specific land and that is exactly what He did.