

Exodus: No Longer Slaves – Part 9

1 Corinthians 10:1, 2; 6 - *For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, 2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea... 6 Now these things took place as examples for us...*

The cloud and the sea was a form of water baptism. It was through the cloud and the sea that Israel entered into their new life as a born again nation.

The Way-Making God

Isaiah 43:16-19 - *Thus says the LORD, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters, 17 who brings forth chariot and horse, army and warrior... 18 "Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. 19 Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.*

1) A New Direction

a) God is a way-maker.

Exodus 13:17-18; 21-22 - *When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, "If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt." 18 So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea. The Israelites went up out of Egypt ready for battle....*

21 *By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. 22 Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.*

i) God chose the way for His people through the wilderness.

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delighteth in his way (Psalm 37:23 KJV).

ii) God chose the way for His people in the wilderness and He led them in dramatic fashion.

So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea. The Israelites went up out of Egypt ready for battle... (13:8).

(1) It is often said that the "wilderness" had no place in the purpose of God for Israel but this is not so. It was God's original intention that Israel should take that exact route.

- (2) Besides that, do you remember in Exodus 3:12 He declared, "When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain." God's purpose in leading Israel to their promised land through the wilderness was His intention even before He called Moses.

The Christian walk is a walk of faith and faith cannot develop unless it is tested. Sometimes, often times, it needs to be tested severely!

b) The pillar of God's presence is the Holy Spirit.

Description: It is called "a pillar of cloud" and "a pillar of fire." Apparently, its upper portion rose up to Heaven in the form of a column, its lower being spread like a cloud over Israel's camp.

This is an incredible foreshadowing of the Holy Spirit's work in believers lives.

i) The Cloud and Spirit of God

- (1) The "Cloud" was not given to Israel until they had been delivered from Egypt by the blood of a perfect lamb.

(a) This is the same order we see in the New Testament work of salvation. First the blood of the Lamb of God had to be shed... then after the ascension of the victorious Christ, came the public descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

(b) Only blood-washed former slaves get to be led by the Pillar of God's presence!

(c) Now, the Holy Spirit... He is always in the face of His people, both day and night!

- (2) The Cloud was God's gift to Israel.

In Luke 11:13, Jesus says like a Dad giving gifts to his children, so will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit as a gift to you!

John 14:16, 17 Esv - *And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive...*

- (3) The Cloud gave them light.

(a) He is called "the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD." (Isaiah 11:2).

- (b) Jesus said to His apostles, “When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will *guide* you into all the truth” (John 16:13).
- (4) This Cloud was darkness to the Egyptians.
 - (a) Exodus 14:20 - ...*coming between the armies of Egypt and Israel. Throughout the night the cloud brought darkness...*
 - (b) The reality is that God reveals and He also conceals. Matthew 11:25 - *I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children.*
- (5) God spoke from the Cloud.
 - (a) Psalm 99:7 - *He spoke to them from the pillar of cloud; they kept his statutes and the decrees he gave them.*
 - (b) The Psalmist is here referring back to such passages as Exodus 33:9.

As Moses went into the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and stay at the entrance, while the Lord spoke with Moses.
 - (c) It is the same today. The Holy Spirit comes on us often and speaks to us in the middle of our needs.
- (6) The Cloud was never taken away from them.
 - (a) Nehemiah 9:19 - *Because of your great compassion you did not abandon them in the wilderness. By day the pillar of cloud did not fail to guide them...*
 - (b) Despite all Israel’s failures—their murmurings, their unbelief, their rebellion—God never withdrew the Pillar of His Presence! So, too, of the Holy Spirit given, believers have this sure promise: John 14:16 - *And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever...*

2) A Huge Dilemma

- a) When God brought them out, they came out wealthy and healthy. Psalm 105:37 tells us ... not one of them faltered (KJV -not one was “feeble”). Did He bring them out only to see them killed and plundered just a couple of days into their journey?

Does God deliver you by the power of His name only to leave you exposed to the devil! No!

There is a reason why the Bible says they came out dressed for battle.

b) Satan won't give you up without a fight!

Jesus warned His disciples that the demonic forces of the devil will frequently come back looking for an open door to gain access back to establish a stronghold in your life.

Exodus 14:4-16 - 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!" **6** So he had his chariot made ready and took his army with him. **7** He took six hundred of the best chariots, along with all the other chariots of Egypt, with officers over all of them. The Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, so that he pursued the Israelites, who were marching out boldly. **9** The Egyptians—all Pharaoh's horses and chariots, horsemen and troops—pursued the Israelites and overtook them as they camped by the sea near Pi Hahiroth, opposite Baal Zephon. **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"

i) It looked as though God had led them into a trap.

ii) Why? God was training them in faith.

3) A Mighty Deliverance

Exodus 14:13, 14 ESV - *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. **14** The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to be silent."*

6 Steps Through the Sea

a) Fear Not

i) "Fear not" is one of the great commands recurring throughout all of Scripture.

Fear is Satan's chief means of attacking God's people.

ii) We are no longer slaves – we must stop thinking like one!

(1) A new identity necessitates a new mindset!

We are way too quick to throw away our confidence in our new life in Christ.

Romans 12:2 - *...be transformed by the renewing of your mind...*

- (2) This battle at the Red Sea was strategically planned in the mind of God to destroy the army of Egypt, but most importantly to change the old slavery mindset that existed in His newly redeemed people.

b) Stand Firm

The word here literally means to take your position.

i) 3 wrong positions:

- (1) The Running Position – running from person to person seeking help from the arm of the flesh. Americans are famous for running from their problems rather than facing them.
- (2) The Grumbling Position – You brought us out here to get us killed! Didn't we tell you to leave us alone?
- (3) The Slumbering Position - In the bed with the sheet pulled over your head! You cannot sleep away the enemy.

ii) The right position:

(1) Take a Firm Stand

What are you going to do in the day of a battle? Stand!

- (2) Ephesians 6:11-13 - *Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 13 and having done all, to stand firm. 14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness.*

c) See the Salvation of the Lord

Hebrews 11:29 - *By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land...*

- i) Moses is saying – See yourself saved! Look with the eyes of faith.
- ii) It was spiritual *sight* that Moses referred to, the exercising of the eyes of the heart.

Faith is a fixing our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal (2 Corinthians 4:18 NIV).

Change your glasses! Stop looking at the enemy through the eyes sockets of a slave!

d) Keep Quiet

- i) 600,000 men, their wives and their children... really? Keep them quiet?!
- ii) What a powerful revelation this is; our flesh needs to be under control so it does not undermine God's work!
 - (1) The tongue operates with authority. It empowers God to work on our behalf and it also gives the enemy legal right to work against us.
 - (2) Fear seems to be fueled by panic when it is spun up through our words.
 - (3) Be silent. Being quiet is the best way to get your flesh under control.

e) Move Forward

Exodus 14:15 - *The Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward."*

- i) Evidently Moses was crying out himself for God to do something more and God said take your steps forward!
- ii) "Go forward" is not contradiction. This is the spiritual order for victory.
 - * Fear Not
 - * Make a stand – overcome your tendency to run!
 - * See your victory with the eyes of faith!
 - * Move forward – act on your faith. Take an action in faith!

Hebrews 11:29 - *By **faith** they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land.*

Many scholars believe that the Red Sea only began to divide after the feet of the Israelites moved to the edge of that water.

Exodus 14:30-31 - *Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. **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.*

f) Don't forget to Dance

Exodus 15:20-21 - *Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing. **21** And Miriam sang to them: "Sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea."*