

## For GC Discussion

- What kinds of Red Sea experiences have we, or might we experience in our lives? How ought we to respond when they come?
- How might the instruction to 'stand still and see..' apply to us in our lives?
- What can we learn from how both Moses and the people responded when faced with this impossible situation?

**Next Week:** we will move on to see the people of Israel's less than distinguished start to life in the desert.

### *Notes and Questions*



## Week 6: The Red Sea

### Exodus Chapters 14-15:21

#### **This Weeks Summary**

This week we see another display of God's saving power. Though His people seemed to be free already, Pharaoh launches one final attempt to get them back, and God has to once again miraculously intervene to save them from a return to slavery.

#### **For Study:**

The verses below all either mention the crossing of the Red Sea, or describe something more of God's saving power to rescue His people:

Joshua 4:1-24

Daniel 6:16-27

2 Chronicles 14:8-12

Romans 1:15-17

2 Chronicles 20:1-19

1 Corinthians 1:17-21

Psalms 68:1-20

Hebrews 7:22-28

Psalms 106:1-12

Hebrews 11:29

Isaiah 31:1-5

1 Peter 1:3-5

Isaiah 51:1-16

**For Worship:** Listen to '**No Longer Slaves**' by Bethel Music. You can find it on YouTube, or on the Hill City Church blog on the website.

This week we studied the famous account of how God parted the waters of the Red Sea in front of His people to once and for all rescue them from the clutches of the chasing Egyptians. Here are a few more things we learn from the account:

### **A Strange Decision**

First off, it's quite strange how the text describes the people getting into the predicament they find themselves in. God tells them to turn back (14:2) which clearly wasn't the logical thing to be doing as Pharaoh's response was going to be 'they are wandering in the land'. God wants Pharaoh to think that the people are confused so that he will chase after them and God can win one final victory over the Egyptian army. Yet again, what that means is that God tells His people to do something that doesn't make sense - He tells them, rather than to make a bee-line for the escape route away from Egypt, to wander in the desert. God puts His people in danger, but all the time knowing exactly what He was going to do, and remaining in complete control of the situation.

You've probably heard it said that when you come to the end of your own resources, that's when you're best placed to see God come through for you in an amazing way and that is exactly where He leads His people on this occasion. It is true that God will also sometimes lead us through strange seasons of life when He seems to be allowing us to wander, or even walk into difficult and dangerous situations when our instinct is to go the other way. What the story of the Red Sea crossing teaches us is that even in these seasons God is always at work, and He is always in control - we can always trust Him to come through for us every time.

### **Moses Growth in Faith**

I think it's great as we read these chapters to consider just how far Moses has come in his own personal journey of faith with the God who called him at the burning bush just a matter of months previously. The man who after 40 years keeping sheep in the desert had been turned into an insecure and fearful man who was full of doubt is so different after seeing what God had done through him in Egypt. It's inconceivable naturally speaking that the man who stood in front of the burning bush and quaked with fear would be able to stand in front of the insurmountable barrier of the Red Sea and proclaim to God's people that they should 'fear not' and to 'stand firm' and see God's salvation unveiled before their eyes. Yet this is where God has taken this man - from full of doubt to full of faith - not perfect as we see in the next verses, but entirely

unrecognisable from the man we saw just a few chapters earlier. This is the exact same journey God wants to take each of us on - from self-reliance, to emptiness, to the fulness of a faith that is confident that God is going to come through for us no matter what.

### **Not One Remained**

This is one of my favourite pictures in the whole Bible, let alone the book of Exodus. The big-picture of the book is full of symbolism, and the power and might of the nation and army of Egypt is a clear picture of the sin that we as people are naturally enslaved to. Just as the people of Israel couldn't set themselves free from the Egyptians grip, so we too can try all we want to free ourselves from sin but will never manage to do so in our own strength. What we need is a deliverer, and that's exactly what the people of Israel found as God through Moses comes to rescue them, but here's the great part. If you can imagine each Egyptian soldier being one of the chains that held the people captive - symbolically each a chain that keeps us bound in our sin - the Scripture makes it clear that every single one of those chains were broken and 'not one of them remained' (14:28).

So too with us - Romans 6 tells us categorically that when we came to know Jesus, when we were born again into the family of God - every chain that bound us was broken off and we were set absolutely free. Paul tells us 'one who has died has been set free from sin' and believing this truth is a big step towards seeing that freedom worked out practically in our lives.

### **A God of Victory**

As we come to the end of the portion of the book of Exodus that speaks of God rescuing His people we should finish by recognising the main message that it is bringing to us: we have a God who is mighty to save, and who will always be victorious. This is what Moses recognises as he sings his song of victory - our God is a God of war, and He will always defeat those who stand against Him. This is why we as His people must fear Him - not the paralysing terror of something out to hurt us, but a reverence, awe and respect of a God we can't control and who is unimaginably far above us. On the other side of that coin, when we genuinely honour God for who He is, we can also rest secure in His care because, 'if God is for us, who can be against us' (Romans 8:31). May the message of this first part of Exodus sink deep down into our hearts and bear the fruits of rest, security and peace that come from knowing just who it is that we belong to.