

**CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE-
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

[Adapted from Bethel Bible-Presbyterian Church,
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DHW BIBLE CLASS

LESSON 11

EXODUS

CHAPTERS 14-15

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever been caught in a situation that you can describe as “between the devil and the deep blue sea”? What do you do? This is the situation in which Moses and the children of Israel were in. They had camped by the Red Sea and now they saw Pharaoh with six hundred of his chosen soldiers on chariots fast approaching them. Their deliverance from such a desperate and hopeless situation as recorded in Exodus chapters 14 and 15 tells many things about God and man.

OUTLINE

**A. PHARAOH PURSUED THE
ISRAELITES (EXODUS 14:1-
12)**

1. The Lord’s final instructions to Moses in getting out of Egypt (14:1-4)
 - a. Moses was instructed to camp by the Red Sea (vv.1-2)

- b. Pharaoh’s heart would be hardened and he would pursue the Israelites (vv.3-4)
2. Pharaoh pursued the Israelites (14:5-9)
 - a. Pharaoh with his chosen chariots and men pursued the Israelites (vv.5-7)
 - b. Pharaoh overtook them at their camp by the Sea (vv.8-9)
3. The Israelites were trapped between Pharaoh’s army and the Sea (14:10-12)
 - a. The Israelites saw the Egyptians coming after them and they were very afraid (v.10)
 - b. The Israelites complained against Moses for leading them to die in the wilderness (vv.11-12)

**B. THE LORD’S RESPONSE TO
THE ENEMY’S EVIL INTENT
(14:13-22)**

1. Moses acting in faith encouraged the Israelites (14:13-14)
2. The LORD instructed Moses (14:15-18)
 - a. The LORD commanded them to go forward (v.15)
 - b. The LORD instructed Moses to raise his rod (v.16)
 - c. The LORD declared that He would destroy the Egyptians (vv.17-18)

3. The LORD protected the Israelites (14:19-22)

- a. The Angel of the LORD relocated His position (vv19-20)
- b. The LORD caused a pathway through the Sea (vv.21-22)

C. THE LORD DELIVERED ISRAEL AND DESTROYED THE ENEMY (14:23-31)

1. The Egyptians pursued the Israelites into the Sea (14:23)
2. The Egyptians realised their failure and decided to abandon chase (14:24-25)
3. The LORD destroyed the Egyptians (14:26-31)
 - a. Moses stretched his hand over the Sea (vv.26-27)
 - b. The waters returned and drowned Pharaoh and all his horsemen (v.28)
 - c. The Israelites were all delivered (vv.29-30)
 - d. The Israelites feared and believed in the LORD (v.31)

D. MOSES SANG A SONG OF PRAISE TO THE LORD (15:1-19)

1. The theme of the song: the LORD is my salvation (15:1-3)
2. The deliverance of the LORD was glorious and great (15:4-12)

- a. Pharaoh and all his captains were drowned in the Red Sea (vv.4-5)
- b. The glory and the greatness of the power of God (vv.6-8)
- c. The enemy's boasts were empty before the LORD (vv.9-12)

3. The LORD steadfastly loves His people (15:13-19)

- a. The LORD is merciful to Israel (v.13)
- b. Fear would fall upon all the people who heard the works of the LORD (vv.14-16)
- c. The LORD reigns forever (vv.17-19)

E. MIRIAM RESPONDED TO THE PRAISES OF MOSES (15:20-21)

1. Miriam led the women to dance before the LORD (15:20)
2. Miriam sang praises to the LORD (15:21)

COMMENTARY

Know that the LORD is God

The LORD instructed Moses to lead the children of Israel to camp by the Red Sea (14:2). The LORD revealed to Moses that Pharaoh's heart would be hardened and he would pursue them, when he saw that the Israelites were being trapped by the Sea. The only way of escape for the Israelites was to be drowned in the Sea. The LORD further

revealed that this attempt by Pharaoh would give the LORD the opportunity to exalt Himself so that the Egyptians might know that He is the LORD (14:4). We see clearly here that the **focus** is not so much on the deliverance of the people of Israel but on Israel's God. God's purpose was to bring the Egyptians to the realisation that the God of Israel is the LORD, not only of Israel but also of all the earth! The enemies of the LORD God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who is the only true and living God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, must be brought to the realisation that if they reject and deny Him today, they would be brought to their knees at God's appointed time and acknowledge that He is LORD and give glory to Him.¹ God's people should be comforted and patient when they are being ridiculed by blasphemers, atheists, scorners and unbelievers at the present time. God knows what is happening and what is going to happen, just as He knew what Pharaoh would do.

We should not be acting like the Israelites, in spite of the fact that the hopeless situation they found themselves in was orchestrated by God, and that God had revealed to them His purpose although God did not reveal the precise action that He would take. That calls for a complete trust and faith in God. But, sadly, as Pharaoh and his six

hundred chariots were fast approaching them, they cried unto the LORD but not to seek His help. Instead they chided Moses — they charged Moses for leading them to die in the open wilderness; they accused Moses of having ulterior motives for the way he dealt with them; they would rather be slaves in Egypt and serve the Egyptians (14:10-12). The Israelites were very sure that they would be slaughtered in the wilderness and their dead bodies left to rot in the open or be consumed by the vultures.

The Israelites seemed to know better what Pharaoh would do to them than what the LORD God would do. The Israelites, really, had no excuse. They had just witnessed the stupendous power of God in delivering them from bondage in Egypt. God had revealed His relationship to them through Moses. Their behaviour and complaints were inconsistent. Why? A lack of faith; a deficiency in trusting the LORD completely, that is why they complained and rebelled.

Many of us today are just like the Israelites. We behave in the same manner. God has revealed that He has loved us to the extent that He spared not His own Son, but delivered us all from the bondage of sin and Satan. Shall He not freely give us all things? So argues the Apostle Paul (Romans 8:31, 32).²

¹ Philippians 2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; 11 And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

² Romans 8:31 What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

But we still do not trust God. We think we know better than God does, although we do not say this openly. But our attitudes and actions speak louder. Like the Israelites, we think that to serve the Egyptians and have a more settled lifestyle is better than to be liberated and struggling in life. In other words, it is better to be in prison with food and shelter than to be free with less food and shelter. Put it in another way: it is better to serve the devil or self than to serve God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who opt to serve the devil, the world and self have no excuse for God has amply revealed Himself and His plan and purpose for mankind. If we have any complaint against God, it is unjustified for we are without excuse. Look around ourselves and we see evidence of the greatness and goodness of God. The trouble with many of us is that we have eyes but we see not, and we have ears but we hear not.

Know the LORD God

Moses' response to the complaints of the children of Israel is the right attitude to adopt. In a situation in which the Israelites were completely hopeless and helpless, Moses told them not to be afraid, but to stay calm, and to trust that the LORD will save them from their enemies. The LORD Himself would go to battle on their behalf. They should not grumble and complain but be still, silent and trusting (14:13-14). The LORD immediately responded and told Moses to speak to the children of Israel "to go forward" (14:15). That means to go into the deep blue sea! God revealed

what he intended to do. As Pharaoh and his chariots approached the children of Israel, the Angel of God, whose presence was symbolised by the pillar of cloud and fire, relocated His position from the front of the Israelites to the rear of them thus shielding the Israelites from Pharaoh and his men. On the Egyptians' side, there was cloud and darkness whereas on the Israelites' side, there was light by night — fantastic and stupendous! Then Moses raised his rod and the LORD caused the waters of the Sea to separate and made a dry pathway between two walls of water for the Israelites to escape to the other side - how wonderful and marvellous! The Egyptians pursued with their chariots. Their chariots were not able to move efficiently on the soft seabed. They were stuck. The Egyptians realised that they were doomed because the LORD was fighting against them (14:25). When the last Israelite stepped on solid ground on the other side, the LORD told Moses to stretch his hand over the Sea, the waters of the Sea returned to normal and drowned "all the host of Pharaoh that came into the Sea" (14:28).³ Thus the LORD saved Israel that day. Israel

³ Some so-called liberal Christians reject this record of the parting of the Red Sea. Instead they argue on the grounds that Red Sea was actually a Reed Sea, which had only about 18 inches of water. How do they reconcile this with the fact that when the waters returned to normal, the Egyptians were drowned? Can they be drowned in a Sea of water only 18 inches deep? The absurdity is so obvious. It takes much more faith to believe the arguments of these so-called biblical scholarship than to simply accept the divine record which is rational and sensible.

saw that great work. They feared the LORD and believed the LORD and His servant Moses (14:31).

God had been gracious and patient with His children. Whenever we are in a difficult and desperate situation, it does no good at all to panic and it is worse to complain against God. Moses' response is exemplary. Do not be afraid. Trust the LORD our God, for He is great and good. He demonstrated that in the most powerful and dramatic way how He preserved and saved His people. The LORD God is the same yesterday, today and forever! He taught the Israelites to fear Him and believe in Him. We ought to do the same: fear Him, and wholly have faith and trust in Him and the Lord Jesus Christ, whom God the Father has sent to deliver us from the bondage of sin and Satan. Our faith in God is fundamental and vital. If our faith is weak, if there is a trace of doubt or unbelief, we cannot act in accordance to the will of God. We will be easily swayed by the winds of deceitful philosophies and doctrines. Guard our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the Word of God without wavering and be steadfast.

Always Praise and Thank the LORD

It has been said that the highest form of praise and adoration is to sing to the one who is to be honoured. Moses sang and the children of Israel sang a song of praise unto the LORD for the salvation, which they had just experienced. The same crowd, who had not long before murmured against Moses and God that they were led to be

slaughtered in the wilderness, sang this song of victory and praise to God. There are two parts: the song of Moses (15:1-19); and the song of Miriam, the sister of Moses (15:20-22).

There are three movements in the song of Moses. Against the backdrop of what God had done in saving the Israelites from a hopeless and helpless situation, the theme of the first part of Moses' song praised the LORD for the glorious victory He had won over the enemies. There is much theology concerning God in this first movement. God always triumphs over the enemy. The enemy's horse, a symbol of power, and the one, who sits on it, are powerless before God. This all-powerful LORD is the strength, song and salvation of the children of Israel, God's chosen people. Moses declared that "He is my God" (15:2). The personal possessive pronoun attached by Moses is significant. Moses had a clear and correct understanding of who God is. He personalised it. While it is true that He is God of the all creation and every man and living thing, Moses testified that He is his God. Every Christian should share the same sentiment and conviction as Moses. The fact that many Christians are not living victorious and effective lives is evident that they do not have this experiential knowledge and conviction of God in their lives. Unless we know and are deeply convicted of who the LORD our God is, we cannot live strong Christian lives and will not be able to make a strong impression on others.

The second movement of Moses' song details the stupendous work of the LORD in saving them from Pharaoh and his men (15:4-10). The use of the figure of speech of "the right hand" of the LORD is significant (15:6, 12). The right hand of God is mentioned many times in Scripture. The context in this song of Moses strongly suggests the import of this phrase. The right hand of God depicts the glorious and great power of God! For the Lord Jesus Christ to be seated in heaven at the right hand of God is to be in a position of absolute power and authority. The enemy can plan his strategy against the people of God and be gratified with his evil works, but God will not be mocked and in His divine wrath need only call upon the wind of the air and the waters of the Sea to spoil the works of the enemy.

The final movement of Moses' song rhetorically asks the question: Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods (15:11)?⁴ The LORD is not only Moses' God, not only Israel's God, but He is the God of the whole earth and all its inhabitants (15:12). There is no other gods but the LORD, (*Yahweh*) He is God. The gods of Egypt had been shown to be no gods at all. Every nation, every people, every inhabitant will hear, and see, and know that it is the LORD God of Israel that has established all things. The LORD shall reign for ever and ever (15:18). Lift up your heads and your hearts unto the LORD who is the

most High, who lives for ever, and whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He does according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou (Daniel 4:34-35)? How comforting and encouraging is this wonderful and eternal truth about our God!

Miriam took a timbrel in her hand and led the women in a song and dance of praise and thanksgiving. Miriam's answering them seems to suggest that the singing was antiphonal. It was responsive. The women asked and Miriam answered. Sing unto the LORD, ye Christians, far and near, for our LORD is good and great. His truth and His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting. The LORD be praised. Hallelujah, Amen!

⁴ The name "Michael" means "who is like God" (*micha-el*)

**DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS**

Daily Readings

MONDAY: Exodus 14:1-12; Isaiah 44:24-28; Proverbs 19:3

TUESDAY: Exodus 14:13-22;
1 Chronicles 29:10-12; Luke 1:37

WEDNESDAY: Exodus 14:23-31; Isaiah 43:1-7; Matthew 18:20

THURSDAY: Exodus 15:1-12; Psalm 100:1-5; Luke 2:20

FRIDAY: Exodus 15:13-22; Psalm 97:1-12; Philippians 2:10-11

Discussion Questions

1. What were the challenges that Moses had to face in this section?

2. What specific promise did God make in verse 4?

3. How justified were the Israelites in their response in verses 10-12?

4. How did Moses respond? What can we learn from him when we are in a hopeless situation?

5. Describe how God saved Israel. What were the natural and supernatural means?

6. What were the results of the events mentioned in verse 31?

7. How can you explain the exultation over the defeat of the Egyptians with the commandment to love your enemies ?

8. What are the important things that Moses and the Israelites understood about God's personality and character?

9. What did Moses and the Israelites understand about God's specific plan and purpose? Is there a similar intention of God mentioned in the New Testament?

10. What comparison can you make in your life experiences with the events and the personalities mentioned in these two chapters?
