

Part 11: The Red Sea

SERMON SERIES: EXODUS - FINDING FREEDOM The Red Sea Exodus 14:1-31

Devotion Emphasis: Trapping Circumstances and Freedom

Day 1 – Israel Is Trapped By The Red Sea

Exodus 14:1- 12 Then the Lord said to Moses, 2 “Tell the people of Israel to turn back and encamp in front of Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, in front of Baal-zephon; you shall encamp facing it, by the sea. 3 For Pharaoh will say of the people of Israel, ‘They are wandering in the land; the wilderness has shut them in.’ 4 And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and he will pursue them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, and the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord.” And they did so. 5 When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the mind of Pharaoh and his servants was changed toward the people, and they said, “What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?” 6 So he made ready his chariot and took his army with him, 7 and took six hundred chosen chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them. 8 And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the people of Israel while the people of Israel were going out defiantly. 9 The Egyptians pursued them, all Pharaoh’s horses and chariots and his horsemen and his army, and overtook them encamped at the sea, by Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon. 10 When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they feared greatly. And the people of Israel cried out to the Lord. 11 They said to Moses, “Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt? 12 Is not this what we said to you in Egypt: ‘Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.”

When was the last time you felt trapped in life? We all know what it feels like to be trapped in life. Our circumstances are inescapable, we have no glimpse of hope, we feel like our only option is giving up, and we feel like we have no one to turn to. It is in these times when we feel trapped and without hope that we need to turn to God the most. God is the God who opens impossible pathways. When the walls close in around us and claustrophobia comes upon us, we must look to the only one who can change our

circumstances. It is far too easy to respond to feeling trapped in the wrong way. When we are trapped we are often willing to return to unhealthy life situations but if we do that, we will always find that those circumstances are their own kind of trap. Let us not be like the Israelites who so quickly turned on Moses and the Lord. Let us be a people who even in the worst circumstances look to the Lord.

Worship Challenge: If you currently feel trapped by your life's circumstances, or the next time you feel trapped, take a deep breath and remember who God is. God may not immediately change your circumstances but no matter the circumstances we face, God walks through them with us. Spend time praising God for being who He is and for not being defined by negative circumstances.

Day 2 – Israel Is Rescued By The Red Sea

Exodus 12:1-13 13 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."

15 The Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. 16 Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground. 17 And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. 18 And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen." 19 Then the angel of God who was going before the host of Israel moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, 20 coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness. And it lit up the night[a] without one coming near the other all night. 21 Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. 22 And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. 23 The Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. 24 And in the morning watch the Lord in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw the Egyptian forces into a panic, 25 clogging their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily. And the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from before Israel, for the Lord fights for them against the Egyptians." 26 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen." 27 So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal course when the

morning appeared. And as the Egyptians fled into it, the Lord threw[c] the Egyptians into the midst of the sea. 28 The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen; of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained. 29 But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. 30 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.

When God frees us from trapping circumstances, He often does so in miraculous ways. The story of the parting of the Red Sea is one of the most well known stories of all time and it's because of the miraculous hand of God moving that the story is remembered. It is a disturbing thought to know the Israelites began doubting God shortly after this miracle. Through the course of our lives, we will ultimately go through many time periods of feeling trapped. We must train ourselves to honor God by reflecting on and remembering how God has faithfully walked with us through prior times of difficulty.

Discipleship Challenge: We must have an accurate understanding of life so we are prepared for the circumstances that make us feel trapped when they come. As much as we would like it to be, life will never be a guaranteed easy road. We must learn to thrive in times of peace and also in times of difficulty. Take some time to think about how you will respond when you come to your next circumstance that makes you feel trapped. The first course of action on your list should always be praising God for being with you in your times of difficulty!

Day 3 – Freedom in Christ

Galatians 5:13-14 For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

The greatest gift God has given us comes through His son Jesus! Jesus died so He could set us free from sin and its consequence. This freedom allows us to live our lives in peace knowing that we have been made right with God. Sin is a trap that manifests itself in an inescapable lifestyle of rebellion against God with inescapable consequences. Jesus is our only source of freedom and He asks us to use our freedom to serve those around us. Jesus frees us from sin so we can make our lives about others.

Discipleship Challenge: Think about how you spend the time you have. Does your life reflect the saving freedom Jesus has given you? Jesus saved us not so we can serve ourselves, but so we can serve Him and others. One

of the ways God asks us to serve Him is in the church. If you are not already serving, make a commitment to follow Jesus in obedience and choose an area to serve in the Orchard!

Day 4 - Faith

2 Corinthians 5:7 For we walk by faith, not by sight

Whether we feel trapped or are walking in peace and feeling the freedom of Christ, following Jesus requires faith. When we are trapped, we must have the faith to continue trusting God with our circumstances. When we are experiencing peace, we must have the faith to continue relying on Jesus in all our circumstances. We will rarely see where Jesus is leading us but when we step out in faith and follow Him one step at a time He is always faithful to lead us where He wants us!

Worship Challenge: Do you have the faith to follow Jesus when you can't see where He is leading? When we are thinking rightly about God and recognizing Him for who He is, it is easy to walk out in faith. When we are not thinking rightly about God, it is easy to stumble! When your faith is wary, remember who God is and walk forward!

Day 5 – Freedom for the World

Ephesians 3:12 In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

Knowing Jesus gives us the freedom to approach God, but what about the billions of people on the planet who don't know Jesus and don't have access to God? They are lost and trapped as slaves to sin. How great is our responsibility to share the Gospel of Jesus when we ourselves have received such an amazing gift? With our freedom in Christ we have been given the opportunity to share Jesus with others who are lost and literally without any kind of hope. Jesus is the hope of the world who makes us right with God.

Evangelism Challenge: Telling others about Jesus often looks like a daunting task and we often don't feel like we are equipped or qualified to share the Gospel, but neither of these are acceptable reasons to not share the Gospel! It is a lie from the enemy that sharing the Gospel is something to fear! Think of three people you know who are not currently involved in church and extend an invitation for them to come and join us at the Orchard this coming Sunday!