

Day 91 – SATURDAY: February 4th

Exodus 14

Exodus 14:1-31 NKJV

Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "Speak to the children of Israel, that they turn and camp before Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, opposite Baal Zephon; you shall camp before it by the sea. For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, 'They are bewildered by the land; the wilderness has closed them in.' Then I will harden Pharaoh's heart, so that he will pursue them; and I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, that the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD." And they did so. Now it was told the king of Egypt that the people had fled, and the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against the people; and they said, "Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?" So he made ready his chariot and took his people with him. Also, he took six hundred choice chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt with captains over every one of them. And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the children of Israel; and the children of Israel went out with boldness. So the Egyptians pursued them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, his horsemen and his army, and overtook them camping by the sea beside Pi Hahiroth, before Baal Zephon. And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians marched after them. So they were very afraid, and the children of Israel cried out to the LORD. Then they said to

Moses, "Because there were no graves in Egypt, have you taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you so dealt with us, to bring us up out of Egypt? Is this not the word that we told you in Egypt, saying, 'Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness." And Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace." And the LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward. But lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. And I indeed will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them. So I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, his chariots, and his horsemen. Then the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gained honor for Myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen." And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them. So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus it was a cloud and darkness to the one, and it gave light by night to the other, so that the one did not come near the other all that night. Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the

waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. And the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. Now it came to pass, in the morning watch, that the LORD looked down upon the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and He troubled the army of the Egyptians. And He took off their chariot wheels, so that they drove them with difficulty; and the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians." Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may come back upon the Egyptians, on their chariots, and on their horsemen." And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and when the morning appeared, the sea returned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing into it. So the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. Then the waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen, and all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. Not so much as one of them remained. But the children of Israel had walked on dry land in the midst of the sea, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. So the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Thus Israel saw the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt; so the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD and His servant Moses.

Daily Deep Dive:

As we come to the end of another reading week, let's begin with the UCG reading plan: "God brought Israel out of Egypt through great signs and wonders. He had communicated to them through His servant Moses and was now miraculously leading them through the wilderness. Israel was now witnessing another miracle—God leading them by a pillar of cloud during the day, which brought welcome shade during the afternoon heat (Psalms 105:39; compare Isaiah 4:5–6; Isaiah 25:4–5), and by a pillar of fire during the night, which gave them a warm, glowing light. But He was leading them in a way that did not seem to make sense, since it was not in the direction of Canaan and was, instead, heading toward a dead-end entrapment. Pharaoh had once again changed his mind, and now the Israelites found themselves trapped between his army and the sea.

One might think that, after witnessing the tremendous miracles that had already taken place, the Israelites would begin to show evidence of trust and faith in the One who had delivered them thus far. Instead, we find a continually complaining, murmuring and backsliding group of people who just aren't getting the point! However, God reminds us that these ancient examples have been recorded for our benefit today (1 Corinthians 10:13). The people, places and

events may be different, but the attitudes prevail throughout the ages.

Are we that different today? Do we ever find ourselves questioning the existence or whereabouts of our Creator? Do we ever doubt God's miraculous intervention in our lives? Do we ever complain, gripe or murmur when things don't seem to be going our way? When our backs are to the "Red Sea" with no relief in sight, do we trust in the words, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord"? An end-time event is yet to occur that will test the faith of God's elect (Revelation 12:13–16). Will God's people remember His miracles, or will they be like the Israelites of old? If one can read about and believe in the One who was so patient, loving and merciful to a stubborn and stiff-necked people, why would one doubt His patience, love and mercy for today? God does not show partiality (Acts 10:34).

While the armies of Pharaoh were encompassed by the dark of the night, the pillar of fire was guiding millions of Israelites, a mixed multitude and millions of animals over the dried bed of the Red Sea. This was an enormous undertaking. One scholar, estimating the throng numbered 2.5 million—when it was likely closer to 3—mathematically "figured that marching ten abreast, the numbers would

have formed a line over 150 miles long, and would have required eight or nine days to march by any fixed point" (Jonathan Kirsch, *Moses, A Life*, p. 175). Obviously since they crossed the Red Sea in a single night, the Israelites were lined up in numbers much greater than ten abreast—probably more like hundreds or thousands abreast!

Pharaoh's rebelliousness was finally brought to an end, then, in a miraculous series of events that all were able to witness. Many have claimed that the Israelites simply walked across a marsh or shallow lake when the water level was low. Part of their argument is that the original Hebrew term translated "Red Sea" is *Yam Suf*, meaning "Sea of Reeds"—reeds being plants like cattails, rushes and papyrus. However, the word *suf* can also mean seaweed (Jonah 2:5). In fact, the Gulf of Aqaba, a finger of the Red Sea, is actually called *Yam Suf* in 1 Kings 9:26. Others, accepting this, will argue that the Israelites were walking on a sandbar at low tide—while the Egyptians got swept away when the tide came in. Yet the Bible clearly says that the waters were a "wall" to the Israelites on both sides (Exodus 14:22)—an awesome miracle that cannot be explained by a coincidence of natural phenomena.

To quote biblical historian Eugene Merrill: "The crossing of Israel, which immediately preceded the drowning of the Egyptian chariotry, cannot be explained as a wading through a swamp. It required a mighty act of God, an act so significant in both scope and meaning that forever after in Israel's history it was the paradigm against which all of his redemptive and saving work was measured. If there was no actual miracle of the proportions described, all subsequent references to the exodus as the archetype of the sovereign power and salvific grace of God is hollow and empty" (*Kingdom of Priests*, p. 66).

Through this incredible symbolic baptism (1 Corinthians 10:2), would the Israelites emerge with a renewed attitude?"

[END]

Verse 3 – Notice, it's by God's great design that the children of Israel were to camp in such a place to inspire Pharaoh to think they are confused and to seek to go out after them to bring back his slaves. God wanted to finish His great grand display of power of Egypt.

Verse 6 & 7 – Informs us that not only did Pharaoh pursue the Israelites with his best chariots, but that he also took "his people with him". I never imagined how big this army may have been. Here's what Josephus records: "for the

number that pursued after them was six hundred chariots, with fifty thousand horsemen, and two hundred thousand foot-men, all armed. They also seized on the passages by which they imagined the Hebrews might fly, shutting them up between inaccessible precipices and the sea; for there was [on each side] a [ridge of] mountains that terminated at the sea, which were impassable by reason of their roughness, and obstructed their flight" [END] This is also confirmed by Jewish chronologer Shalshalet Hakabala (John Gill).

Verse 13 – After the Israelites witness the Egyptian army coming after them, they become afraid and begin to complain, and then Moses delivers one of the great recorded lines of the Bible: "Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace." This great line and moment for the Israelites is immediately followed up with God's command for Israel to get moving in verse 15.

Verse 31 – Time and time again, Israel had seen the great power of God, but here at last, at a moment where their fear overcame them, God again proved that He is all powerful, made a way that seemed impossible before, and eliminated their great oppressors and enemies. The result for the moment is a proper fear and belief in God.

