

Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea

Exodus 14

The Children of Israel had, over the last few months, experienced some of the greatest wonders any people have ever seen. Although they are powerless to help themselves out of slavery, their God has stepped in and destroyed the Egyptians, economically, spiritually, agriculturally and socially. They have seen ten dreadful plagues brought upon their captors. And they have finally been set free from their bondage. God has also given them favor in the sight of the Egyptians who have given them much gold and silver and other precious items so that they have spoiled the Egyptians.

But now they have been brought to the first test of their faith. The cloud that leads them has led them into a position that seems to bring them imminent death.

Pharaoh with his chariots and horsemen and soldiers are coming and there is no place to flee and no way of defense. They are helpless against the mighty army of the Egyptians.

Isn't it interesting that of all that God has destroyed in Egypt, the army of Pharaoh was left unscathed. Egypt may be destroyed but the most powerful military in the world is still there. They will soon raise Egypt back to her place of power and importance. They will teach these Hebrews a few lessons and bring them back to Egypt.

This illustrates the depravity of man and his ongoing battle against God. Once again Pharaoh's heart is hardened and he forgets all the lessons of the past and acts as though there is no God and he once again can rule supreme.

But God has reserved an even greater destruction for the military. The Lord will utterly annihilate them in the greatest miracle yet.

1 Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2 "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.

Many have looked into these names to determine their exact location but it is pretty much hopeless to find the exact place that it is speaking of.

But it was the place where God had told them to be. Later it appears that they are in the wrong place, a place that will cause their destruction. But as long as we are where God wants us to be we can be assured that He will bring us through.

3 For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, 'They are bewildered by the land; the wilderness has closed them in.' 4 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. 5 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?" 6 So he made ready his chariot and took his people with him. 7 Also, he took six hundred choice chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt with captains over every one of them. 8 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. 9 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.

Now we see the working of God.

God does not force wicked Pharaoh to pursue Egypt, He just removes the grace that would have saved Pharaoh and his army. God allows Pharaoh to be as stubborn as he wants to be. Man hates God and allows them to do that in order to destroy them.

Psalms 2:1-12 (NKJV) 1 Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, 3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." 4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The LORD shall hold them in derision. 5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: 6 "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion." 7 "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. 8 Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.' " 10 Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth. 11 Serve the LORD with fear, And rejoice with trembling. 12 Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish in the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.

1 Samuel 2: 24 "No, my sons! For it is not a good report that I hear. You make the LORD'S people transgress. 25 "If one man sins against another, God will judge him. But if a man sins against the LORD, who will intercede for him?" Nevertheless they did not heed the voice of their father, because the LORD desired to kill them.

God is going to use the destruction of Egypt and the salvation of Israel to get glory to His name.

This will be the event that is remembered throughout Israel's history as the high point for which they will glorify God.

Joshua 24:6-7 (KJV) 6 And I brought your fathers out of Egypt: and ye came unto the sea; and the Egyptians pursued after your fathers with chariots and horsemen unto the Red sea. 7 And when they cried unto the LORD, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them, and covered them; and your eyes have seen what I have done in Egypt: and ye dwelt in the wilderness a long season.

Psalms 106:7-8 (KJV) 7 Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies; but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red sea. 8 Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known.

Isaiah 51:15 (KJV) 15 But I am the LORD thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared: The LORD of hosts is his name.

Joshua 2:10-11 (KJV) 10 For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that

were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. 11 And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.

Romans 9:17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

Future psalmists would extol the Lord for His mighty works at the Red Sea (Pss. 66; 78; 80-81; 105-106; 136), and the prophets would use the Exodus to encourage the Jewish exiles in their return to their land after the Babylonian Captivity (Isa. 43:1-7; 52:11-12; 55:12-13; Jer. 16:14-15; 23:7-8), as well as to motivate the backslidden nation to return to the Lord (Jer. 2:2-3; Ezek. 20; Hosea 2:14-23; Amos 3; Micah 6:3-4). Bible Exposition Commentary - Be Delivered (Exodus 25-20).

10 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. 11 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? 12 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."

As long as the Israelites kept their eyes on the fiery pillar and followed the Lord, they were walking by faith and no enemy could touch them. But when they took their eyes off the Lord and looked back and saw the Egyptians getting nearer, they became frightened and began to complain. Unbelief has a way of erasing from our memory all the demonstrations we've seen of God's great power and all the instances we know of God's faithfulness to His Word. Bible Exposition Commentary – Be Delivered (Exodus 25-20).

And there we are.

I wish that it was only the children of Israel that become weak kneed when the trials come. But it is not. It is us as well.

We have all been where Israel was that day, Between the devil and the deep blue sea. It seems that there is no way out, an impossible situation.

But in this we forget the promise of God, the provision of God and the power of God.

As did David when he ran to the Philistines to save his live from Saul.

God had promised them that they would worship before Him at Mt Sinai, and He would lead them into the promised land.

God had taken care of them up to this point. Was He not all powerful? Could He not strike the Egyptians with some sort of plague.

Is anything too hard for the Lord, God had asked Abraham.

13 And Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid.

Pr 29:25 The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe.

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. 14 The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace."

15 And the LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward. 16 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.

17 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. 18 Then the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gained honor for Myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen."

19 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. 20 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.

21 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. 22 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.

23 And the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. 24 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. 25 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."

26 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." 27 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. 28 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.

29 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. 30 So the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. 31 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.

Being caught **between the devil and the deep blue sea** does not mean that one or more options cannot be employed to bring resolution to a situation. What it does imply is that none of the available solutions will allow a resolution without some amount of frustration and damage. As a result, someone will incur a loss of some type no matter what type of action is taken. This leaves the decision maker with the task of finally identifying which course of action will result in the least amount of damage, in hopes of being able to repair that damage and move on with as little difficulty as possible.

<http://www.wisegeek.com/what-does-between-the-devil-and-the-deep-blue-sea-mean.htm>