

Exodus Chapters 13 & 14 -- John Karmelich

1. Chapter 13 of Exodus is the continuation of God's "marching orders" as the Israelites begin to leave Egypt. Try to visualize *two million people* moving across a country.
 - a) Actually, try to imagine two million people doing *anything* with a sense of order!
 - b) You'll notice God does not spend a lot of time talking about keeping people in-line or, where do we get food, or where do we go to the bathroom.
 - c) God's first set of business for the Israelites is "remembering this event!" Why?
 - i) Salvation first, then comes our growth as a Christian,
 - a) just as birth precedes maturity.
 - ii) When Christians celebrate the ritual of communion, we are reminded about what God did for us. Christians should perform communion on a regular basis simply to remember what God did for us.
 - a) *Next*, we can focus on our "walk with God".
2. The end of Chapter 12 focuses on the instructions for two (of three) holidays celebrated by the Jewish people, all in the same month. The 1st was Passover and the 2nd was "first-fruits".
 - a) Chapter 13 focuses on the 3rd holiday, which was "Feast of Unleaven Bread".
 - i) This is a 7-day feast where Jews are to eat only Unleaven bread. Like all 7 of the feasts ordained by Moses, they are prophetic of Jesus' role and ministry, as well as practical applications for Christians. We'll discuss that as we go.
3. So why does God want them to annually remember this event?
 - a) The best modern comparison I can think of is "the 4th of July".
 - b) Our founding fathers wanted us to remember "the 4th of July" as long as the United States exist. They wanted us to remember what this day meant in terms of freedom, so it was commemorated in a holiday (as early as 5 years after the declaration by some states).
 - c) So what does this have to do with our Bible lesson?
 - d) Same principle. Declare a holiday and remember what I did for you!
 - e) God wants us always to remember, what he has done for us, on the Cross, and the whole redemption "game-plan" beginning with the call of Abraham, all for the purposes of calling a people to himself.
 - f) "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. (1 Peter 2:9 NIV *emphasis added*)
4. Chapter 14 is the famous "parting of the Red Sea". Most people who have never read the Bible are familiar with this scene. Most people have seen the movie "The Ten Commandments" and/or the animated movie "The Prince of Egypt."
 - a) With that said, I want to get that visual of the movie out of your head.
 - b) Picture two million people crossing the Red Sea. I think a mile wide or a two-mile wide parting is more realistic.
 - c) Because this story is so widely known, it is amazing how many books are out there trying to give a "plausible" explanation. Some say the sea was only a few feet deep. If that was true, the miracle is even *more* amazing because the Egyptian Army drowned in only a few feet of water!
 - i) It is like I've always said, "If you can handle the first verse of the bible, you can handle the rest of it". The first verse states "In the beginning, God created the heaven and earth." A God who is capable of creating the heavens and earth is also capable of parting the Red Sea.

5. As you read the rest of the Bible, you will notice God constantly reminds the Israelites that He (God) was the one who called them out of Egypt. This is a model of redemption. There are a lot of references throughout the Bible to the calling of “his people” out of Egypt. But there are comparatively few references to the parting of the Red Sea.
 - a) In fact, God asks the Israelites to remember the Passover as opposed to remembering the other plagues or remembering the parting of the Red Sea. Why?
 - i) The Passover speaks of God’s redemption of his people. The sacrificial lamb in exchange for their “first born” sons.
 - a) The parting of the Red Sea is God simply altering His creation.
 - ii) Which is of greater importance, God’s redemption, or God’s creation?
 - iii) God created the world in 6 days. I suspect the only reason God took that long was for us to use it as a model of a workweek. I believe he could have done the whole thing in six seconds as well as six days.
 - a) This is why a lot of mature Christians don’t get involved in the great debate between six “literal” days vs. six “eras of time”. God can create the world as fast or slow as he wants. Taking the Bible *seriously* is the utmost of importance. Debating over interpretation is less important.
 - b) Back to my point: Creation cost God 6 days of his time. I suspect God could create another one with the snap of his fingers. What did *redemption* cost God? His son! This is why God wants us to focus & remember his redemption! It is far costlier to God than anything God created.
6. Chapter 13, Verse 1: **13:1** The Lord spoke to Moses: **13:2** "Sanctify to me every firstborn male- whatever opens every womb among the Israelites, whether human or animal, is mine."
 - a) “Sanctify” simply means to set apart. If there is a roomful of empty chairs, and you pick out one to sit in, you have “sanctified” that chair.
 - b) So why does God want to set apart (sanctify) all the “first-born males, be it man or beast. Why would God care about a first-born cow, for example?”
 - i) God wants us to trust him. Trusting him is also “putting your money where your mouth is”. The animals were not pets to the Israelites, they were *their source of income*. By giving God “the first”, they had to trust God for future income. That is what “tithing” is all about, giving God the first (say 10%) of what you make. It is a sign that you believe God and trust him day by day.
 - a) Does this mean God needs money? No. He created the world. Its all his. God sets up this principal for our benefit. Who you give it to is obviously important, and first choice should be your local church. More important than who you give it to is the fact you are willing to trust God enough that you are willing to commit to this principal.
 - b) I have yet to met one person in my lifetime that has gone broke by giving too much money to God. Trusting God with the *first* of your income means you are putting faith in God to supply the *rest* of your income!
 - ii) Does this mean one is to sacrifice (kill) their first-born son? No, as God sets up a method of redemption later in this chapter.
 - a) This principal is a model of God’s redemption plan. By actually paying a tax to God (via a priest) as “redemption of your first-born son”, God is teaching us a prophetic model of God-himself paying the price (through Jesus, God’s first-born son) for our redemption.

7. **13:3** And Moses said to the people, "Remember this day in which you came out from Egypt, from the place where you were enslaved, for the Lord brought you out of there with a mighty hand-and no leavened bread may be eaten. **13:4** On this day, in the month of Abib, you are going out.
 - a) I already discussed in my introduction, how God wanted the Israelites to remember how they were redeemed.
 - i) Christians perform a similar ceremony when we gather for communion. We do this to remember what God has done for us through Jesus.
 - a) Does this mean we only have to have communion once a year like the Israelites? No. Paul lays out the ceremony of communion in First Corinthians, Chapter 11. Although there is no specific timetable given, the chapter seems to imply we should do this "often". For some churches that is every day or week, others it is every month.
 - b) Verse 3 says, "no leavened bread may be eaten".
 - i) "Leaven, or yeast is used symbolically of sin. It grows by "puffing up." God used this as a model
 - ii) Paul says "Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth. (1 Corinthians 5:8 NIV)
 - c) A technical comment. Later in Jewish history the month of "Abib" is called the month of "Nissan". Don't let these two words confuse you if you study a Jewish calendar.
8. **13:5** When the Lord brings you to the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, which he swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, then you will keep this service in this month.
 - a) Why do the Israelites have to wait until they have to be "in the land..." before they could commemorate this holiday?
 - i) In my opening statement, I compare these holidays to the 4th of July?
 - a) Do you think the founding fathers took a day off from fighting the British to celebrate the 4th of July? No! It wasn't until after the war was won that this became a holiday. One celebrates a holiday of remembrance once the victory (our salvation) is won!
 - b) The "wilderness" time speaks of purging "the old life" out of us. When the Israelites finally entered the "Promised Land" this speaks of our new lives as Christians. There are still battles to be fought once we actually enter the promise land, but (for the most part), we no longer "crave" our old lives before we became Christians, and in the Promised Land look to God to solve our problems and guide us.
 - b) Why does God refer to this land as the land of the "Canaanite, the Hittite, etc. etc."?
 - i) Well, the Israelites have never been there so this is how they could relate to it? Until the Israelites actually conquer this land, it is still the land of those people.
 - ii) The land of Israel (i.e. "the Promised Land") does not refer to a "type" of heaven. I don't believe we have to fight "battles" in heaven, as the Israelites do when they get there. What it means symbolically is once we enter the "promised land" it represents the battles with our old "sinful nature" that we still fight, although we are believers.

9. **13:6** For seven days you will eat unleavened bread; and on the seventh day there is to be a festival to the Lord. **13:7** Unleavened bread must be eaten for seven days; no leavened bread will be seen by you, nor will leaven be seen by you within any of your borders.
- a) Here we have the 3rd of the “feasts” associated with the Passover season. In Chapter 12, we had the instructions for “Passover” and the instructions for “First-Fruits.”
 - b) This is a 7-day feast of eating unleavened bread.
 - i) As mentioned, I believe Christians can relate to this by communion.
 - ii) Jesus says “I am the bread of life” (John 6:35)
 - iii) Jesus also told his disciples “While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.” (Matthew 26:26 NIV)
 - iv) Unleavened bread, i.e. no yeast, represents the “bread of life with no sin.” A great model of Jesus Christ.
 - v) Should Christians literally celebrate a 7-day feast of unleavened bread? No. This event is prophetic and looks *forward* to what Jesus did. We have communion as to look *back* at what Jesus did!
10. **13:8** And you are to tell your son on that day, 'It is because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt.'
- a) Remember your redemption. Share this with your children. Let them know what is important for your life.
 - i) One pastor I read this week talked about having a “family communion time”. Since God modeled “the family” as a place to gather to remember what he did for us, we should use that same model at times and have family communion to teach our children what it means.
 - ii) God did not call the church with the primary responsibility of raising your children, but the parents, primarily the father.
 - b) I am of the opinion that God holds Christian parents responsible for their children’s religious education (our rewards in heaven, not salvation). We are not responsible for their outcome (free will comes into place), but I believe Christian parents are obligated (out of love for the Lord) to teach our children about God and what Jesus did for us.
11. **13:9** And it will be a sign for you on your hand, and a memorial between your eyes, so that the law of the Lord may be in your mouth, for with a mighty hand the Lord brought you out of Egypt. **13:10** So you must keep this ordinance at its appointed time from year to year.
- a) The key word in verse 9 is “sign”. It is not to be taken literally. Orthodox Jews actually make little scriptures that hang from their foreheads between their eyes!
 - b) The sign is to be on our hands, (representing our actions), “between our eyes” (representing keeping our focus on God) and our mouth (what we say).
 - c) Jesus taught that our actions are more important than literal interpretations of some laws. Here’s an example: (Pharisee’s focused on eating certain foods to be “clean”.)
 - i) Jesus said ““Don't you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean.' (Matthew 15:17-18 NIV)
12. **13:11** When the Lord brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as he swore to you and to your fathers, and gives it to you, **13:12** then you must give over to the Lord all that opens the womb, and every firstling of beasts that you have-the males will be the Lord's. **13:13** And everything that opens the womb of the donkey you must redeem with a lamb, and if you do not redeem it, then you must break its neck; and you must redeem every firstborn of your sons.
- a) We’ve already discussed the purpose of given the “first-born” of *all* that belongs to the Israelites (and us!) to God. To repeat, it is designed to show that we really trust God. We give God the first of our earnings, trusting he will provide for our needs.

- b) Verse 13 specifies instructions for redeeming a donkey? Why single out donkeys?
 - i) Some commentators say it is because a donkey is levitically “unclean”. I believe they missed the point. When I think of a donkey, I think of “stubborn”. Most of you have heard the expression “stubborn as a mule”.
 - a) God often refers to Israelites as “stiff-necked” or “stubborn” depending upon your translation, when they are in rebellion to God.
 - ii) I believe the principal is to be “stubborn as a mule”. We can be Christians, and still be disobedient at times, as we want to do things our way.
 - iii) So when God asks the Israelites to sacrifice their first-born donkeys, I believe he is setting up a visual reminder to them to give up their “stubbornness”.
13. **13:14** And when your son asks you in time to come, 'What is this?' then you are to say to him, 'With a mighty hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the land of bondage. **13:15** And when Pharaoh stubbornly refused to release us, then the Lord killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of people even to the firstborn of animals. That is why I am sacrificing to the Lord every male that opens the womb, but all the firstborn of my children I redeem.' **13:16** And it will be for a sign on your hand, and for frontlets between your eyes, for with a mighty hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt."
- a) Most of these verses are repetitive of those earlier in the chapter. (God is speaking to fathers/males. We need to hear things several times before it sinks in! ☺)
 - b) The one word repeated over & over again in these verses is “first-born”.
 - i) A title of Jesus Christ in the New Testament
 - ii) Again, a message for us to pass on to our children. Setting apart the “first’s” of everything we have for God’s use as a demonstration of our trust in Him.
14. **13:17** When Pharaoh released the people, God did not lead them on the way to the land of the Philistines, although that was nearby, for God said, "Lest the people change their minds when they experience war, and return to Egypt." **13:18** And so God led the people around on the way of the wilderness to the Red Sea. And the Israelites went up from the land of Egypt prepared for battle.
- a) The compass direction from Egypt to the land of Israel was northeast. God was leading the people southeast. Why?
 - i) The best answer is verse 17: “Lest the people change their minds when they experience war, and return to Egypt.”
 - a) The direct route toward the promised land had Egyptian military outposts along the way.
 - ii) The mistake we make is we try to stay “one step ahead” of God. We *think* we know God’s next step and go in the wrong direction.
 - iii) The “route” God chooses for our lives can often be more difficult than the one that seems the obvious. During those times we need to *trust* God that he knows what is best for our lives.
15. Here is a neat little verse tucked in the middle of the narrative: **13:19** And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for Joseph had made the Israelites solemnly swear, "God will surely visit you, and you will carry my bones up from this place with you."
- a) Why bother with Joseph’s bones? Joseph is dead, you think he’ll notice the difference?
 - b) This is about visual reminders. We all need those from time to time. Sometimes a little sign on the wall or a carefully placed scripture help keep us focused on God.
 - i) God made promises to Abraham in Genesis that the Israelites would be slaves for 400 years in Egypt, and then God would call them out as a nation.
 - ii) Joseph was Abraham’s great-grandson. Joseph *believed* this promise. He wanted his grave in Egypt to be a visual reminder to the Israelites that God fulfills his promises.

- a) The writer of Hebrews picks up on this: “By faith Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions about his bones. (Hebrews 11:22 NIV)
 - iii) Moses gave instructions to carry Joseph’s bones as a visual reminder that God keeps his promises.
- 16. **13:20** So they journeyed from Sukkoth, and camped in Etham, on the edge of the desert. **13:21** And the Lord was going before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them in the way; and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could go by day and night. **13:22** He did not take away from before the people the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of the fire by night.
 - a) Here is the first of many references to “the pillar of fire by day, and a pillar of cloud by night”. “Fire” represents warmth (comfort) as well as light. “Cloud” covering represents *comfort* from hot weather, like, oh, say, the wilderness!
 - b) So what is *our* “comforter” and guiding light. This is a model of the Holy Spirit.
 - c) Jesus himself refers to the Holy Spirit as “the comforter”. That is what the Holy Spirit’s name (in the original Greek) means.
 - d) The main function of the Holy Spirit is to “to be our guiding light” and “comforter”. The Holy Spirit tells us what to pray for when we don’t know.
 - i) In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. (Romans 8:26 NIV)
 - ii) The “fire by night” and “cloud by day” is a 24-hour assurance that God is always with us!
- 17. **14:1** And the Lord spoke to Moses: "Tell the Israelites that they may turn and camp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea; opposite Baal Zephon you are to camp by the sea. **14:3** And Pharaoh will think that the Israelites are wandering around confused in the land-the desert has closed in on them. **14:4** And I will harden the heart of Pharaoh and he will chase after them, and I will be honored because of Pharaoh and because of his army; and the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord." So this is what they did.
 - a) God is not through with Pharaoh yet. Pharaoh & the Egyptians suffered through multitudes of plagues. Apparently Pharaoh believed that the Hebrew God was a great & powerful God, but that it is not necessary to worship our God. So God has further plans for demonstrations for Pharaoh. Why?
 - i) Read verse 4 again: “the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord.”
 - ii) The upcoming demonstration, which is the “parting of the Red Sea” is not only to build the faith of the Israelites, but it is a demonstration to the Egyptians.
 - a) Again, why? You would have thought the Egyptians would have learned their lessons by now.
 - b) This leads back to my point. Pharaoh and Egypt thought the Hebrew God was powerful. Powerful enough they had to obey Him and let the Hebrew’s go. But they still didn’t believe they had to obey God once they let the Hebrew’s go. That is what God wants to demonstrate.
 - b) This model still fits in today’s world. Many people believe that Christians have every right to “do their thing”, but they themselves don’t have to repent.
 - c) God goes out of his way to prove that He and He alone is God of gods & Lord of lords.
 - i) There is no excuse for not worshipping Him.
 - ii) Paul makes this point in Romans.
 - iii) “For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.” (Romans 1:20 NIV)

18. **14:5** It was reported to the king of Egypt that the people had fled; and the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against the people. So he said, "What in the world have we done? For we have released the people of Israel from serving us!" **14:6** Then he prepared his chariots and took his army with him. **14:7** And he took six hundred of the best chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and officers on all of them.
- a) It's hard for me to comprehend how short peoples' memory is or how great people's ego can be. Pharaoh just got *destroyed* by 10 plagues, and yet, now they want to stop the Hebrew children from attacking.
 - b) "Maybe Pharaoh thought that the Lord had shot all His arrows; after all, no more died after the plague of the firstborn; but God isn't short on resources!" David Guzik
 - c) As a long-time Christian, I tend to forget that there are people ready to make war with God. To someone who understands God's power, this is beyond comprehension.
 - i) In a way, I can understand people rebelling against God-believing people, because they don't want to change their lifestyle. What is difficult for me to comprehend is people making war *against God himself!* Since that is what Satan himself did, I'm partially of a belief there are satanic forces behind such attacks directly against God himself.
 - ii) Jesus himself gives us this reminder when we deal with people of the world:
 - a) I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. (Matthew 10:16 NIV)
 - d) "One bit of trivia before we move on... Why "six hundred of the best chariots and all the chariots of Egypt? Why single out 600?
 - i) If you study the Bible, the number "seven" usually means completeness, or perfection in the Godly sense. The world was made in seven days. The number "six" is "less than seven" and is associated with imperfection. It is also associated with "man". For example six of the 10 commandments are about our relationship with our fellow man. This is why in Revelation "666" is the number of a "man". So when you read about the "600 chariots", it is a reference of man, in his humanity, using "the best of what he has" to try to take on God. We'll read later in this chapter how good "Man's best" is in the eyes of God!
19. **14:8** But the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt; and he chased after the Israelites. Now the Israelites were going out defiantly. **14:9** And the Egyptians chased after them, and all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, overtook them camping by the sea, beside Pa-hahiroth, opposite Baal-Zephon.
- a) The plot is now thickening for the big "parting of the Red Sea" scene.
 - b) The key of this passage, from the Pharaoh' point of view is "Now the Israelites were going out defiantly". Some people hate to lose & their pride is the last thing to die.
20. **14:10** When Pharaoh got closer, the Israelites looked up and saw that the Egyptians were marching after them. They were terrified. Then the Israelites cried out to the Lord. **14:11** And they said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt you took us away to die in the desert? What in the world have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? **14:12** Was this not what we told 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 desert!"
- a) Earlier I was criticizing Pharaoh for having "short memory disease". He witnessed 10 plagues against him & his country, yet "forgot" and attacked the Israelites.
 - i) Before we "tsk tsk" Pharaoh, check out who else has "short memory disease". The Israelites *also* witnesses 10 plagues where God miraculously got them out of Egypt. Yet first sign of trouble & they are grumbling away.

- ii) One of the best pieces of advice one can give to give to a Christian is to keep a journal of all the things that God does in our lives. The “amazing coincidences” and the blessings. Any single one of them by themselves is a coincidence. But incident after incident after incident points to God. During those trial periods when we don’t see God, we, like the Israelites need to remember that God has taken us this far, and won’t let us down now!
 - b) There is a “model-point” of our Christian walk to point out here. If Pharaoh represents “the enemy of God- i.e. Satan, why does Pharaoh continue to persecute believers once they become Christians? After all, as one continues to abide in Jesus, one is always saved. (That’s a good balance between “free-will” and “always-saved” viewpoints). So why is the devil so interested in persecuting believers?
 - i) One reason is to make our witness ineffective. Satan knows his time is limited and Jesus is coming back based on once a “pre-determined” number of believers come into the kingdom (Romans 11:25). We don’t know the exact number, but that exact number exists, and therefore Satan is fighting to delay that number.
21. **14:13** And Moses said to the people, "Do not fear! Stand firm and see the salvation of the Lord that he will provide for you today; for the Egyptians that you see today you will never, ever see again. **14:14** The Lord will fight for you, and you can be still."
- a) At this point, Moses did not know how God would come through. Moses logical assumption is that God would wipe them out. Therefore, Moses made the statement “Stand still & see the salvation of the Lord”
 - i) Personally, I give Moses “B” for his response ☺. Give Moses leadership credit for encouraging people in times of crisis. But Moses presumes what God is going to do. It is always a bad thing to “put God in a box” and assume what God will do next. God rebukes Moses in the next verse.
22. **14:15** And the Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. **14:16** But as for you, lift up your rod and extend your hand toward the sea and divide it, so that the Israelites may go in the midst of the sea on dry ground.
- a) Here is my loose translation “Hey Moses, whoever said I was going to wipe out the Egyptians up on that ridge? Now shut up & get moving into the sea!”
 - b) Why did God command Moses to use his “rod” to part the Red Sea? Couldn’t God just give the command and the Red-Sea-be-parted?
 - i) Of course, but God *delights* to work through us. It gives God a chance to show how much He loves us and wants to work *through* us.
 - ii) By using Moses & his rod, God was building confidence in the Israelites that God himself choose Moses as their leader.
 - iii) For all us “mystics”, some people see the “lifting of the rod” as a model of Jesus being lifted up” prior to the crossing of the Red Sea. The crossing is a model of our baptism into our new lives as Christians.
23. **14:17** But I am going to harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will pursue them, that I may be honored because of Pharaoh and because of his army and because of his chariots and because of his horsemen. **14:18** And the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord when I have gained my honor because of Pharaoh, because of his chariots, and because of his horsemen."
- a) Back in Exodus 5:2 Pharaoh asked “Who is the Lord that I should obey him?”
 - i) In a sense, God never finished answering that question.
 - ii) With the 10 plagues, God proved that He is greater than all the gods of Egypt.
 - a) Apparently, it still didn’t convince Pharaoh that he himself must bow the knee to God. One way or another everyone, one day will acknowledge the true God as *the* God. Whether by free will or by force.

- b) Paul picks up on this in Romans: ""'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God.'"" (Romans 14:11b).

24. **14:19** And the angel of God, who was going before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them, and the pillar of the cloud moved from before them and stood behind them. **14:20** And it went between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; it was a dark cloud to them, but it lit up the night for these, and one camp did not come near the other camp the whole night. **14:21** And Moses stretched out his hand toward the sea, and the Lord caused the sea to go apart by a strong east wind all that night, and he made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. **14:22** So the Israelites went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

- a) Ok, here's the big scene the parting of the Red Sea. Remember that we're talking about 2 million people crossing. I visualize a one-mile wide gap, and the ground dry enough one could walk across it.
- b) Re-read verses 19 & 20. Notice how God not only guides the Hebrews, but also "darkens" the vision of the enemies of Israel.
- c) This reminds me of Chapter 1 of the Gospel of John. It is a reference to people who read/seen/heard/meet Jesus, but didn't "get it"
 - i) The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.
 - a) (The Gospel of John 1:5 NIV)
 - ii) Here is a principal God is laying out throughout the Bible. What is "light" to us is "darkness" to the rest of the world. In other words,. Non-Christians don't "get it". They don't understand what all the fuss is all about. They don't understand the joy. They don't understand why we don't want to socialize with them. When we get to the tabernacle, you'll notice that the beauty is only seen from the *inside*, from the outside, it is rather plain.
 - a) One of the Old Testament descriptions of Jesus from Isaiah 53 is that the Messiah would be fairly "plain-looking":
 - (1) "He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him." (Isaiah 53:2b, NIV)
 - b) I personally suspect that Jesus was rather average looking. When Jesus was being betrayed in the garden, Judas had to pick him out for the soldier's sake. (Again, nothing special about him). It is only once we *know* Jesus that we see the beauty of following Him!
- d) In 1992, The Los Angeles Times published an article on the "plausibility" of the Red Sea Crossing:¹
 - i) "'Sophisticated computer calculations indicate that the biblical parting of the Red Sea, said to have allowed Moses and the Israelites to escape from bondage in Egypt, could have occurred precisely as the Bible describes it.
 - ii) Because of the peculiar geography of the northern end of the Red Sea, researchers report Sunday in the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society, a moderate wind blowing constantly for about 10 hours could have caused the sea to recede about a mile and the water level to drop 10 feet, leaving dry land in the area where many biblical scholars believe the crossing occurred."
 - iii) Whether or not this is *actually* how it happened is a matter of debate. This article just showed some plausibility.

¹ , "Research Supports Bible's Account of Red Sea Parting" (3/14/92), by Thomas H. Maugh, L.A. Times

25. **14:23** And the Egyptians chased after them; they went into the midst of the sea after them-all the horses of Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen. **14:24** And in the morning watch the Lord looked down on the host of Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and he threw the Egyptians into a panic. **14:25** He jammed the wheels of their chariots so they had difficulty driving, and the Egyptians said, "Let's flee from the presence of Israel, for the Lord fights for them against Egypt."
- a) That same Los Angeles Times Article states: "An abrupt change in the wind would have allowed the waters to come crashing back into the area in a few moments, a phenomenon that the Bible says inundated the Israelites' pursuers."
 - b) The crossing of the Red Sea represents a turning point in the Egyptian history. Never again were the Israelites bothered by Pharaoh.
 - c) In "typology", the Red Sea seems to imply the limits of Satan's power against the believer. Satan can persecute us as Christians, but he has limits.
 - i) The crossing is a representation of our baptism. Our new life as Christians. It is here that our enemy is defeated. Yes, Satan can still persecute us, but he can't take away the joy of our salvation.
 - ii) Speaking of "typology", if the crossing of the Red Sea represents our baptism, what does the "crossing of the Jordan into the Promised Land" represent?
 - a) The direct answer is our new life as Christians. Once we accept Jesus, God works us as we still have a lot of "our old life" still in us. That is what the "wilderness" represents". The purpose of the wildernesses is to kill off our desires of "the flesh" and then enter the Promised land.
26. **14:26** And the Lord said to Moses, "Extend your hand toward the sea, so that the waters may flow back on the Egyptians, on their chariots, and on their horsemen!" **14:27** So Moses extended his hand toward the sea, and the sea returned to its normal state when morning appeared. Now the Egyptians were fleeing before it, but the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. **14:28** The waters returned and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the army of Pharaoh that was pursuing the Israelites into the sea-not so much as one of them survived. **14:29** But the Israelites walked on dry ground in the midst of the sea-the waters were like a wall to them on their right hand and on their left hand.
- a) There is a supplement to these verses in Psalm 77:16-20.
 - b) "The waters saw you, O God, the waters saw you and writhed; the very depths were convulsed. The clouds poured down water, the skies resounded with thunder; your arrows flashed back and forth. Your thunder was heard in the whirlwind, your lightning lit up the world; the earth trembled and quaked. Your path led through the sea, your way through the mighty waters, though your footprints were not seen. You led your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron. (Psalm 77:16-20 NIV)
 - c) Picture these verses from the standpoint of the Israelites. A little while ago, they were standing on the *Egyptian* side of the Red Sea. The army is coming, and they were "trapped". All of a sudden, God comes, makes an escape route via a way they would *never* have thought of. Not only did it make a way of escape, it killed the army that was pursuing them.
 - i) Folks, I just described the miracle of our salvation and God's redemption game plan in a few sentences. God provides a way of escape from this sinful life in a way you, I, or none of us would ever have thought up: God himself paying the price for our salvation. And to boot, we in the end (think Revelation) will watch our enemies be destroyed before our eyes.

- ii) OK, John, I get all that, what about work problems, or my financial problems, or my problems with so-and-so?
 - a) The model is still the same. Although we don't know how God will come through, God will. Always has & always will. Sometimes we stand still and *see* the salvation, other times, we have to walk in a way that is unexpected. But the victory is already ours.
 - 27. Here is the summary of the chapter: **14:30** So the Lord saved Israel on that day from the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the shore of the sea. **14:31** When Israel saw the great power that the Lord had exercised over the Egyptians, they feared the Lord, and they believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses
 - a) OK, it took the parting of the Red sea to convince the Israelites that God is the God and that God has chosen Moses as their leader.
 - b) We will soon read that the Israelites, like the Egyptians (and us) have short memories, and will be “grumbling and complaining” again soon.
 - c) The most important lesson I can get across during your Christian walk is to “keep your eye on God and remember what God has done for you already.” Never think that God has taken you this far to let you down now.
 - i) Our great hope is that we could be like the Israelites that day as in Verse 31 when it says “they feared the Lord, and they believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses” Amen!
 - 28. Let's Pray. Father, There are days we are facing the armies of our enemies all around us and there looks like there is no way out. Help us to remember that you are always there guiding us. You want the best for our lives and have a plan if we can just learn to trust you. Help us to walk forward by faith and you will make a way for us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, the first-born over all creation, Amen.
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