

Beginning of Freedom

Key Verse: “*Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore.*”
—Exodus 14:30

Selected Scripture:
Exodus 14:21-30 **ONCE THE ISRAELITES** were released from Egyptian servitude they must have felt they were on their way to freedom, well beyond Pharaoh’s reach. Perhaps soon they would be in the desert and proceed on their journey safely. God, however, redirected Moses to have them retrace their steps the same way they had come, and camp near Pihahiroth. After following these instructions, they found themselves in a very difficult situation, according to human reasoning, because they were hemmed in by mountains on both sides with a sea in front of them. Additionally, some distance from the rear Pharaoh and his army were approaching to overtake them. Moses assured the children of Israel that the Heavenly Father had the situation under control. Thus he responded that they would see the salvation of God which ultimately would result in their freedom and the destruction of their enemies.—Exod. 14:1-14

God then informed Moses as to the next step to be taken to accomplish this deliverance. “The LORD said unto Moses, . . . speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward: But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine 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, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.”—vss. 15-18

The pursuing Egyptians were neutralized by divine intervention, as a “pillar of the cloud” served as a barrier between the camp of Pharaoh’s army and the Israelites. After Moses stretched forth his hand, God caused a wind to part the waters of the Red Sea, and the children of Israel were able to cross the passage in safety to the other side. When the Egyptians attempted to overtake them through the same corridor, Pharaoh and his hosts drowned. “The waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them.”—vss. 19-28

Our Key Verse affirms God’s faithfulness in delivering Israel from her enemies, and should inspire confidence in all believers that every promise contained in his Word must surely come to pass.

In considering the experiences of Israel, Paul writes, “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world [ages] are come.” (I Cor. 10:11) If, as Christians, we experience difficulties that cause us to complain or even doubt the Father’s concern for our spiritual well-being, we should pray upon the matter, rehearse the precious promises in the Bible assuring us that we will never be forsaken, and recount with gratitude the many ways in which we have been sustained and delivered in the past. Surely, the Eternal One will freely give us all things needful, if we remain loyal and obedient to him. “If God be for us, who can be against us?”—Rom. 8:31,32 ■