

Rescue to Freedom

Exodus 13-14

Opening Prayer

Dear Lord, help us never forget that You lead the people You have redeemed. When we come to a Red Sea place of desperation in our own lives, give us enough sense to stop and wait for You to act. Then give us the courage to move on, knowing that You always go with us. In all of life's struggles, victory is with You, because You have become our salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Exodus 13:6-16

Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a feast to the LORD. (7) Unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days; no leavened bread shall be seen with you, and no leaven shall be seen with you in all your territory. (8) You shall tell your son on that day, 'It is because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.' (9) And it shall be to you as a sign on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes, that the law of the LORD may be in your mouth. For with a strong hand the LORD has brought you out of Egypt. (10) You shall therefore keep this statute at its appointed time from year to year. (11) "When the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as he swore to you and your fathers, and shall give it to you, (12) you shall set apart to the LORD all that first opens the womb. All the firstborn of your animals that are males shall be the LORD's. (13) Every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb, or if you will not redeem it you shall break its neck. Every firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem. (14) And when in time to come your son asks you, 'What does this mean?' you shall say to him, 'By a strong hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, from the house of slavery. (15) For when Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, the LORD killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of animals. Therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all the males that first open the womb, but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.' (16) It shall be as a mark on your hand or frontlets between your eyes, for by a strong hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt."

1. The ceremony of unleavened bread and the redemption of the firstborn were to remind the Israelites that because God had spared them, they belonged to Him (vv. 9,16). How does the Lord's Supper remind you that you have been redeemed?
2. What in your own life tells others that you belong to God?
3. God is our Redeemer. In the sacrifice of Jesus, from what did God redeem us?

Colossians 1:13-14 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, (14) in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"—

2 Timothy 1:10 our Savior Christ Jesus abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

1 John 3:8 The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

While the ransom metaphor focuses on the price that is paid, the redemption metaphor focuses on the act of paying the price." Our redemption in Christ is like a transaction: The curse we deserved because of our sins is now transferred to Christ"

Exodus 13:17-22

(17) When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near. For God said, "Lest the people change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt." (18) But God led the people around by the way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea. And the people of Israel went up out of the land of Egypt equipped for battle. (19) Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for Joseph had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones with you from here." (20) And they moved on from Succoth and encamped at Etham, on the edge of the wilderness. (21) And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. (22) The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.

4. The Israelites had come to Egypt some 400 years before the exodus when Joseph, one of the 12 sons of Jacob (Israel), had become a high officer of Egypt and invited his family to settle there to escape a famine in Canaan (Genesis 37-50). Toward the end of his life Joseph requested that his bones be taken back to the land God had promised His people. How did these directions from Joseph give evidence of his faith?
5. The Lord's presence was signified in a pillar of cloud by day and one of fire by night (v. 21). What does this same God promise to you about His presence with YOU?

Isaiah 41:10 fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Joshua 1:9 Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

Psalms 23:4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

Matthew 28:20 Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the world."

6. Even though God doesn't guide us by cloud and fire anymore, what are the ways that God does guide us in our lives?

Psalms 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Exodus 14:5-14

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." (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."

7. How will God bring Himself glory through the Egyptians? (We'll discuss this in more depth later).
8. In the following passage, how does Jesus bring glory to God?

John 17:3-5 And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. (4) I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. (5) And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

9. How do the Israelites respond when they take their eyes off the Lord and instead focus on what is going on around them? How do we often respond the same way when we do the same thing?
10. The Israelites were terrified. How does trust in God's promises (and His faithfulness to those promises) help us face our fears (vv. 13-14). What do these passages tell us?

Hebrews 13:6 We can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"

Psalms 118:5-9 Out of my distress I called on the LORD; the LORD answered me and set me free. (6) The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me? (7) The LORD is on my side as my helper; I shall look in triumph on those who hate me. (8) It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man. (9) It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.

11. What truth concerning our salvation is taught in vs. 13-14? (Hint: Ephesians 2:8-9)

Exodus 14:15-31

(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 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 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.

12. Moses told the Israelites to "stand firm ... be still" and God ordered them, "Move on." With the sea in front of them and the enemy behind, what did it take for the people to obey God's command?
13. When we face a problem that seems insurmountable, how can we tell when we are to be still and wait and when it is time to move on? Take a look at the following psalm verses.

Psalms 119:133 Keep steady my steps according to your promise, and let no iniquity get dominion over me.

Psalms 27:14 Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!

Psalms 130:5 I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope;

14. Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, but who REALLY parted the waters (Exodus 14:16, 21)? Does God still use "human agents" today to accomplish His miraculous acts of deliverance?
15. How is God's deliverance through a big stick similar to God's deliverance in bread and wine? In water? In simple words?
16. Think about a time when you were between a rock and a hard place. What renewed your faith and calmed your fears?
17. After God's mighty act of deliverance, His people feared Him and put their trust in Him (v. 31). How does God's great act of salvation on the cross strengthen our conviction that God will sustain us in the crises of everyday living? How does St. Paul emphasize this point?

Romans 8:31-32 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? (32) He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

18. How did God first rescue Moses through water? How did that first rescue foreshadow God's saving action through water later in Moses' life? What does God's deliverance of the Israelites through the Red Sea have to do with His blessings to you in Holy Baptism?

Closing Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, we praise you for delivering the Israelites from the slavery and bondage of Egypt. Just as they were redeemed, you have redeemed each of us – bought with the blood of Christ. Help us this week to remember how you declare us holy, and teach us how to serve you. In Jesus' name. Amen.