



Sunday, June 28 • Exodus 14:15-25, 30

Saved From the Enemy

When have you had difficulty going forward when you faced seemingly impossible obstacles?

The week's Scriptures have led up to today's study, which deals with the great encounter of God, the Israelites, and the Egyptians at the Red Sea.

The Israelites were filled with fear, anxiety, and despair. In the midst of their flight from Egypt, Moses tried to assure his followers that "the LORD will fight for you" (Exodus 14:14).

God asked Moses why he was crying out to God (verse 15). Neither Moses nor the people had "cried out" to God, yet God was aware of their discomfort and anguish. God told Moses to tell the people to "go forward."

This order probably seemed outlandish to the people. They had come a great distance but now faced a barrier at the Red Sea. With no way to cross over the water, they were faced with warriors at their back and drowning in the sea in front of them. How could they possibly go forward?

Often in our lives, we are faced with similar dilemmas. Our logic says that we have impossible tasks to do or anguishing trauma to bear. If we ask God for help and direction, we may sense God telling us to go forward, yet our own emotions and doubts keep us immobilized and despairing. We feel vulnerable and unprotected.

We, like Israel, must realize that God has ways of guiding, leading, and protecting. On this occasion, God's pres-

ence that had led Israel with a "pillar of cloud" and an "angel of God" went to the rear of the people and hid them from the Egyptians (verses 19-20). Moses stretched his hand over the sea, and an east wind dried out the sea bed. (This action was similar to what they would face again in 40 years when they crossed the Jordan River into Canaan; Joshua 4:23.) The people crossed through the dry gulch. During the morning watch, which occurred between 2 and 6 A.M., God confused and hindered the Egyptian army. God drove them into the parted waters; and at dawn, Moses raised his hand again, and the water engulfed the warriors.

God wanted to "gain glory for myself over Pharaoh and all his army" (verse 17). Before the Egyptians were inundated with the water, they recognized that God was fighting for the Israelites. What Israel had not completely believed, Egypt learned too late. However, after the deaths, "Israel saw the great work that the LORD did. . . feared the LORD and believed in the LORD" (verse 31).

Even though verse 30 states that God saved Israel from Egypt, God also through this event saved Israel from its own disbelief. We, too, must be open to the ways God's deliverance can open our eyes to God's presence, power, and love.

Prayer: I believe, God. Help me with my disbelief. Amen.