

Week 6: The Waters - Exodus Ch 14-15

Pre-Work

- The parting of the Red Sea is far more than a miracle of the moment - it is a pattern that holds true for all God's people. To learn more about this pattern and prepare for our study, watch the following video from the Bible Project titled "The Exodus Way".

<https://bibleproject.com/videos/the-exodus-way/>

- Please read Exodus Chapters 14-15 in the translation of your choice. What stands out to you in these chapters? What questions arise in your mind when you read them?

Class Notes

- The Biblical imagery of “the sea” or “the waters”
- What it means to “go through the waters” / emerge from the waters
 - Genesis 1 on the third day
 - The “tebah” through the flood
 - The “tebah” and Moses drawn from the reeds
- Two points of unresolved patterning:
 - The emergence of Israel as God’s family from the waters
 - The consequence of Pharaoh’s drowning of the sons of Israel in the waters

14 Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² “Tell the sons of Israel to turn back and camp in front of Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea; you shall camp in front of Baal-zephon, opposite it, by the sea. ³ For Pharaoh will say of the sons of Israel, ‘They are wandering aimlessly in the land; the wilderness has shut them in.’ ⁴ And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and he will chase after them; and I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD.” And they did so.

- The change in route is to reveal the true character of Israel’s oppressor. He will think they are trapped, and so Pharaoh will fall into the trap he thinks he has made.
- What Pharaoh and his army intend to do is dishonor Yahweh; in fact, Yahweh will be honored.

⁵ When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his servants had a change of heart toward the people, and they said, “What is this *that* we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?” ⁶ So he had *horses* harnessed *to* his chariot and took his people with him; ⁷ and he took six hundred select chariots, and all the *other* chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them. ⁸ So the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he chased after the sons of Israel as the sons of Israel were going out boldly. ⁹ Then the Egyptians chased after them *with* all the horses *and* chariots of Pharaoh, his horsemen and his army, and they overtook them camping by the sea, beside Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon.

- Pharaoh and the people repent of their repentance.
- The Israelites are caught between the power of the snake and the power of Leviathan.

¹⁰ As Pharaoh approached, the sons of Israel looked, and behold, the Egyptians were coming after them, and they became very frightened; so the sons of Israel cried out to the LORD. ¹¹ Then they said to Moses, “Is it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you dealt with us in this way, bringing us out of Egypt? ¹² Is this not the word that we spoke to you in Egypt, saying, ‘Leave us alone so that we may serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness!”

- Israel’s response is to blame Moses (as they did when Pharaoh made them work without resources).
- Fear causes them to prefer oppression over having to trust the Lord.

¹³ But Moses said to the people, “Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will perform for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again, ever. ¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you, while you keep silent.”

- “See the salvation”, not the Egyptians
- Yahweh will hold the battle; you will hold your tongues

¹⁵ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to Me? Tell the sons of Israel to go forward. ¹⁶ As for you, lift up your staff and reach out with your hand over the sea and divide it, and the sons of Israel shall go through the midst of the sea on dry land. ¹⁷ And as for Me, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them; and I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen. ¹⁸ Then the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD, when I am honored through Pharaoh, through his chariots, and through his horsemen.”

- If Yahweh is doing all of this, why does He command Moses to lift his staff and reach out with his hand?

¹⁹ Then the angel of God, who had been going before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them. ²⁰ So it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel; and there was the cloud along with the darkness, yet it gave light at night. Therefore the one did not approach the other all night.

- The angel of God/the presence of God prevented a premature advance by the Egyptians

²¹ Then Moses reached out with his hand over the sea; and the LORD swept the sea *back* by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided.

- On the third day...

Gen 1:9 Then God said, “Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear”; and it was so.

- Note the “east wind”

²² So the sons of Israel went through the midst of the sea on the dry land, and the waters *were like* a wall to them on their right and on their left. ²³ Then the Egyptians took up the pursuit, and all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his horsemen went in after them into the midst of the sea. ²⁴ But at the morning watch, the LORD looked down on the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and brought the army of the Egyptians into confusion. ²⁵ He caused their chariot wheels to swerve, and He made them drive with difficulty; so the Egyptians *each* said, “Let me flee from Israel, for the LORD is fighting for them against the Egyptians.”

²⁶ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Reach out with your hand over the sea so that the waters may come back over the Egyptians, over their chariots and their horsemen.” ²⁷ So Moses reached out with his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal state at daybreak, while the Egyptians were fleeing right into it; then the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. ²⁸ The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen, Pharaoh’s entire army that had gone into the sea after them; not even one of them remained. ²⁹ But the sons of Israel walked on dry land through the midst of the sea, and the waters *were like* a wall to them on their right and on their left.

A chiasm:

A - Israel walked through the sea on dry land (v22)

B - The Egyptians went into the sea (v23)

C - The Lord struck the Egyptians (v24)

D - The Egyptians could not handle the chariots (v25a)

E. The Egyptians acknowledged Yahweh (v25b)

D` - Yahweh used the hand of Moses (v 26-27a)

C` - The Lord overthrew the Egyptians (v27b)

B` - The sea covered the Egyptians (v28)

A` Israel walked through the sea on dry land ((v29)

30 So the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. **31** When Israel saw the great power which the LORD had used against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in His servant Moses.

- The flood design pattern
- Israel was inappropriately afraid, but after this baptism/new creation, they “fear the Lord”

- Poetry is 1/3 of the Bible
- While narrative engages the imagination and discourse engages the intellect, poetry engages the emotions
- Who composed the song?

15 Then Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song to the LORD, saying:

“I will sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted;
The horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea.

2 The LORD is my strength and song,
And He has become my salvation;
This is my God, and I will praise Him;
My father’s God, and I will exalt Him.

3 The LORD is a warrior;
The LORD is His name.

4 Pharaoh’s chariots and his army He has thrown into the sea;
And the choicest of his officers are drowned in the Red Sea.

5 The waters cover them;
They went down into the depths like a stone.

⁶Your right hand, LORD, is majestic in power;
Your right hand, LORD, destroys the enemy.

⁷And in the greatness of Your excellence You overthrow those who rise up against
You;
You send out Your burning anger, *and* it consumes them like chaff.

⁸At the blast of Your nostrils the waters were piled up,
The flowing waters stood up like a heap;
The depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.

⁹The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoils;
I shall be satisfied against them;
I will draw my sword, my hand will destroy them.'

¹⁰You blew with Your wind, the sea covered them;
They sank like lead in the mighty waters.

¹¹Who is like You among the gods, LORD?
Who is like You, majestic in holiness,
Awesome in praises, working wonders?

¹²You reached out with Your right hand,
The earth swallowed them.

¹³In Your faithfulness You have led the people whom You have redeemed;
In Your strength You have guided *them* to Your holy habitation.

¹⁴The peoples have heard, they tremble;
Anguish has gripped the inhabitants of Philistia.

¹⁵Then the chiefs of Edom were terrified;
The leaders of Moab, trembling grips them;
All the inhabitants of Canaan have despaired.

¹⁶Terror and dread fall upon them;
By the greatness of Your arm they are motionless as stone,
Until Your people pass over, LORD,
Until the people pass over whom You have purchased.

¹⁷You will bring them and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance,
The place, LORD, which You have made as Your dwelling,
The sanctuary, Lord, which Your hands have established.

18 The LORD shall reign forever and ever.”

- Imagine the feelings of those who sang this song...
- Future cast...what the Egyptians learned by experience, the nations that would oppress God’s chosen should take note

16 The waters saw you, God,
the waters saw you and writhed;
the very depths were convulsed.

17 The clouds poured down water,
the heavens resounded with thunder;
your arrows flashed back and forth.

18 Your thunder was heard in the whirlwind,
your lightning lit up the world;
the earth trembled and quaked.

19 Your path led through the sea,
your way through the mighty waters,
though your footprints were not seen.

20 You led your people like a flock
by the hand of Moses and Aaron.”

~Psalm 77:16-20

19 For the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his horsemen went into the sea, and the LORD brought back the waters of the sea on them, but the sons of Israel walked on dry land through the midst of the sea.

- This recap emphasizes the defeat of chaos by means of chaos, and the deliverance into New Creation for those who fear the Lord

20 Miriam the prophetess, Aaron’s sister, took the tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing. **21** And Miriam answered them,

“Sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted;
The horse and his rider He has hurled into the sea.”

- Who was there when Moses was rescued from the waters?

- 3 days, danger related to water, complaint, rescue by means of Moses' lifted staff and reaching hand.
- This next event is framed by similar elements:

²² Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness and found no water. ²³ When they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, because they were bitter; for that reason it was named Marah. ²⁴ So the people grumbled at Moses, saying, "What are we to drink?" ²⁵ Then he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree; and he threw *it* into the waters, and the waters became sweet.

- 3 days, danger related to water, complaint, rescue by means of Moses throwing a tree

There He made for them a statute and regulation, and there He tested them. ²⁶ And He said, "If you will listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God, and do what is right in His sight, and listen to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for I, the LORD, am your healer."

- The bitter water and thirst was a test, but somehow through an intermediary with a tree, Yahweh will be their healer

John 7:37 *Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink."*

1 Peter 2:24 (ESV) *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.*

²⁷ Then they came to Elim where there *were* twelve springs of water and seventy date palms, and they camped there beside the waters.

- 12 - Image of Israel
- 70 - Image of the nations

Reflections