

Exodus 14: 1-4

- 1** "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 2** Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn and encamp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baal-zephon: before it shall ye encamp by the sea.
- 3** For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in.

Exodus 14: 1-4

4 And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them; and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; that the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD. And they did so."

God protected the children of Israel from all the plagues in Egypt. He saved them through the blood during the Passover. But as long as they were in Egypt, they were not totally free.

God knew that accepting His grace does not set them free from all boundaries - to do so would not be a gift at all, but a curse.

The children of Israel must know that true freedom does not come by the defeat of the enemy, nor by plainly leaving Egypt but by trusting His direction.

The children of Israel had now arrived near the head of the Red Sea, at the limit of the three days' journey into the wilderness, for which they had appealed to Pharaoh. It was a critical time with them.

At the command of God, as made known to Moses, they continued their journey, and soon found themselves in very perilous circumstances.

While the people might have appeared to be trapped, the Lord was setting the stage to ensnare Pharaoh. God would be honored through Pharaoh, for after his defeat all would know that **"I am the LORD."**

God's plan sometimes seems foolish. Our job is not to question but to follow it.

A person is silhouetted against a bright sky, standing on the edge of a high, reddish-brown cliff. The cliff face is steep and textured. In the background, several trees with sparse, dark foliage stand on the cliff top. Below the cliff, the ocean is visible with white-capped waves breaking against the shore. The overall scene is dramatic and evocative.

THE
Walk
OF FREEDOM

Our text opens up with how God told Moses to lead the people of Israel to a dead end as they camped facing the sea **(Exodus 14:1-2)**.

There were two ways by which Israel could reach Canaan: the near way through Philistia or the farther way by the wilderness in the south.

God was doing something to challenge his people.

What can we learn from this passage?

- 1. The Providence of God.**
- 2. The Trying Situations.**
- 3. God's Glory, Our Freedom.**
- 4. The One Who Walked Our Freedom**

We cannot advance far into life without meeting with things to perplex us. The Israelites are commanded to change the direction of their march.

I. THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

Exodus 14:1- 2

God's providence means the protective care of God.

The children of Israel were commanded by God to encamp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baal zephon. Here they are led south, in an opposite direction to the Land of Promise.

This is a trial of their faith. If, at such times, they obey the Divine word, they go right, even though they may seem to be going wrong. No situation could have been more unfavorable to the Israelites than that into which they are now Divinely led.

They are brought here by God and to the carnal mind this is a mystery.

We are led by Heaven, and yet are brought into great peril.

God's way is the wisest, even though it be the roughest, for if between Migdol and the sea we realize our greatest peril, we also realize His richest mercy and His most glorious help.

It is in the trying situations of life that we get the best revelations of the love and power of God. When men feel that they cannot help themselves, then God helps them. Thus they are humbled.

When God fixes our position, it is sure to be a salutary one, even though it be perplexing.

Application: Sometimes we may not like the direction on which God wants us to walk through but it is the best path because of his providence. We may go through some sorrows but there we will experience his richest mercy.

II. THE TRYING SITUATIONS.

Exodus 14: 3

The trying circumstances into which God's people are providentially brought are observed by the wicked.

“For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, they are entangled in the land; the wilderness hath shut them in”
(Exodus 14:3).

Here we see how soon the wicked repent of any good action they may have done. They give up their sins, but soon go after them again. Affliction is not necessarily regenerative.

Application: There will be people sent by the devil to bring us afflictions. Sometimes they will show they are good but behind they are evil. They are wolves in sheep's clothing. They may attack when they find an opportunity. They will be those people used against us in our trying moments.

With the keen eye of a warrior Pharaoh sees the position of Israel in the wilderness.

**How does the wicked observe
God's people?**

1. The Wicked Observes Vigilantly.

The enemy is very vigilant. He studies our moves and tendencies. When he notices our tendency to sin and weaknesses, he will send his army of destruction.

Pharaoh watched with the utmost vigilance the flight and circumstances of the Israelites.

Satan sets the wicked to watch the good, with malicious intent, that they may observe the most favourable opportunity of doing them moral injury.

2. The Wicked Observes Maliciously.

Why did Pharaoh follow the Israelites in this great haste? He came to render their circumstances more trying, and, if possible, to complete their defeat.

But malice is not always right in its calculations; it cannot always achieve its unholy purpose, especially when seeking the ruin of the chosen ones.

3. The Wicked Observes Militantly.

Pharaoh watched the march of the Israelites, and when he saw them surrounded by the mountains and the waters, he sought by his army to put the final obstacle in the way of their escape.

Satan watches the best opportunity of frustrating the walk of the soul into freedom.

Application: The enemy is always watching and waiting for the time he could take advantage of us. He is waiting for us to be entangled and trapped so he can begin his attacks. We must also be aware that there will be some wicked people who may be good to us for a while then change suddenly to attack us.

III. GOD'S GLORY, OUR FREEDOM.

The glory of God is our freedom. And our freedom is to walk into the direction of glorifying God.

God will **“get glory over Pharaoh and all his host”** (Exo 14:4). When they took heed of God's seemingly unreasonable direction their enemy was overthrown. God led them to a situation that required them to trust in Him as they walk and so giving Him the glory.

The trying situations into which God's people are brought are designed ultimately to enhance the glory of God, and the punishment of wicked men. God says, "I will be honored upon Pharaoh," "That the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord."

The Divine Being works the deliverance of His own as to destroy their enemies, and to teach a lesson of trust for the future. We learn much about God when we are shut in by the land, and when earthly succor is denied us; we learn our own weakness and the all-sufficiency of Jehovah.

God is honored in the overthrow of evil. All the trying circumstances in which his children are placed will work the glory of God.

Application: Rest patiently in the circumstances in which God has placed you. God is greater than all the hindrances to your true freedom. Follow God, even though it be through the great waters.

IV. THE ONE WHO WALKED OUR FREEDOM

God was always the one initiating. God chose Moses to lead them. He saved them from the plagues. He moved Pharaoh's heart. He moved the Egyptians heart to favor them as they come out of Egypt and He led them by the pillar of fire and cloud, and later across the Red Sea through dry land. Even if at that moment they were faced with danger, God's providence was there. So if Israel obeyed, it was just their response to the goodness of God. If they loved God, it was their response to God's love. Yet they were not good people at all. They were people of complaints and fear.

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." **Romans 8: 28**

Our love to God is just our response to His greater love which He showed first when He sent His own Son to walk on earth 2,000 years ago. God loved you and I so much that he made His own Son walk the walk of death so he can help us walk the walk of freedom.

For the children of Israel, a stiff-necked people, God intervened as they walked to their freedom but He did not intervene for His only Son. God used the enemy's attack and turned it into favor for Israel but He allowed the enemy's blow to hit His own Son. The pillar of cloud turned into brightness for the sake of Israel as they crossed the Red Sea but darkness covered His own Son as he hung dying on the cross.

When the children of Israel came out of Egypt, they carried their burdens along. When you walk with all the burdens on our shoulder, you are not free at all.

Jesus walked for our freedom by fulfilling God's will and direction. Therefore the freedom that He walked must now be lived, or appropriated by us. Paul says, "and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." If you believe Jesus died in your place, you must live and walk as a man freed by God's grace.

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CONCLUSION:

The LORD is the God whose glory is achieved through His means and purposes, not ours. He called Israel to walk free. Despite their fears, God proved to them that His plans and ways are still perfect. Even if the enemy pursued them, He turned their evil plan into something that worked for His people.

Jesus walked the walk of freedom for us when he walked the road to Calvary. He denied his own will, only devoting himself to the will of the Father for us.

CONCLUSION:

Now God is calling you and I to walk the walk of freedom. He desires that we become free of everything that enslaves or binds us. He also wants us to walk the freedom by following his direction so He can turn what the enemy meant for evil for our good.