

Title: Stand Still and See!
Text: Exodus 14: 1-14
Date: July 1, 2018
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

When God has redeemed us out of bondage and delivered us to faith in Christ, we tend to come out with a *high hand*. That is how the children of Israel came out of Egypt. They were fearless and thoughtless of any danger coming their way. That is how we tend to be when the Lord first converts us to faith in Christ. We think everything will be easier now. But we soon find that is not the case at all.

In fact, when God calls us to faith in Christ the real warfare begins: warfare between flesh and spirit, warfare against the entanglements of this world, warfare against our own unbelief. But God has promised to lead us, remember?

Psalm 32:8: I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.

Psalm 121:3: He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Proposition: Yet, God leads us through trials to remind us we are yet sinners and to teach us that he is the one leading us and the one who shall deliver us from all our enemies. This lesson we never stop learning.

EXAMPLE OF FAITH

Exodus 14: 1: And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2: Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn and encamp before Pihahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baalzephon: 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. 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.

Instead of taking them into the desert sand, (which would have made it impossible for Pharaoh's chariots to catch them), instead of taking them the way into Canaan that was near, God commanded Moses to turn the Israelites south—literally turning their backs to Canaan—which kept them very near the border of Egypt.

Then the Lord told Moses to encamp where they would be trapped. Before Pihahiroth—the mouth of a pass through the mountains; between Migdol—a mountain fortress; in front of the Red sea over against Baalzephon—which was a stone Egyptian idol-god that was supposed to stop slaves from escaping. So they would be trapped: surrounded by mountain and sea. But brethren when the Lord leads us in a way that seems sure to bring a trial we don't understand, hasn't the Lord taught us?

Isaiah 55:8: my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

Psalm 37:5: Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.

Believe the Lord and commit to thy way to the LORD no matter where he leads in his providence!

Then the Lord told Moses the reason he took them that way is because he would harden Pharaoh's heart so that *Pharaoh would attack them*—“*And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them.*”

Just as the Lord forewarned Moses what was coming, Christ has forewarned us. Hasn't the Lord Jesus told us beforehand to expect tribulation in this world? But our peace is in Christ in his gospel, not in this world.

John 16: 33: These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

So it should not surprise us when God leads us into a trial; it should not be a hindrance to our faith.

1 Peter 4: 12: Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: 13: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

And the Lord even told Moses that he was going to get honor to himself upon Pharaoh and his army—“*and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; that the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD.*” This should really settle us in faith. We know that in all things our Lord brings to pass, he shall bring glory and honor to his great name.

Did he glorify himself when he chose his people by his grace, without a cause in us? Where were you and I? We did not contribute. What about when he sent his Son and fulfilled the law on our behalf, purged our sins, apart from our works? We certainly did not contribute to that work? How about when he quickened us without us even knowing what had happened—and called us in such power that we could do nothing but believe on the Lord Jesus his Son? Did he get glory to his name? Indeed, we were dead, we contributed nothing. In our salvation, the Lord brought glory to his name and saved us from the enemy! So he can get glory to his name without our help in our lesser trials, why should we doubt, ever?

The LORD can get honor to his name because he is absolutely sovereign with all power over all. Look down the page, he told Moses he would harden Pharaoh's heart then he did it.

Exodus 14: 5: And it was told the king of Egypt that the people fled: and the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people, and they said, Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us? 6: And he made ready his chariot, and took his people with him: 7: And he took six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over every one of them. 8: And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children of Israel:

This is one of the greatest reasons we should never doubt but always believe God.

Proverbs 21: 1: The king's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD, *as* the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

Amos 3: 6:...shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done *it*?

Whatever comes to pass is the LORD working his eternal purpose to glorify himself and save his people. And he is working all things together for the good of them that love the Lord and he is doing it on purpose. Oh, what a comfort to our faith!

So, here is faith in God, this is what we ought to always do—"And they did so." Moses believed and feared God rather than man, so he obeyed God and led them in God's way.

Brethren, faith not only believes the Lord, faith obeys the Lord. Where God has given faith, God also produces fruit—good works, obedience to him. "*For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*" (Jas 2:26) The good works he produces in his people are rooted in believing that God is able to save and loving our brethren. Moses believed God was able to save and he loved his brethren therefore he obeyed God and took them the way God commanded

EXAMPLE OF UNBELIEF

Exodus 14: Exodus 13: 8...and the children of Israel went out with an high hand. 9: But the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses *and* chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pihahiroth, before Baalzephon. 10: And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the LORD. 11: And they said unto Moses, Because *there were* no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? 12: *Is* not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For *it had been* better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.

This is how we tend to react to trouble. While there is a new man within us that believes, as we saw in Moses, usually our visible outward man acts like the children of Israel. So every believer knows this trouble. God delivers us and we come out with a high hand: full of joy, happy, no fear of man—Canaan seems near at hand. Then God puts us to the test.

On one side was *a mountain*—we face big mountainous trials that we cannot get over. On the other side was *an idol god*—our flesh is a self-righteous idolater but God continues to make our idols vain unto us. Before them was *the Red Sea*—the only way that sea could be dried up is by a rod—a picture God's rod of justice being satisfied so we can go over on dry ground. Bearing down behind them was *Pharaoh and his army*—sometimes by permission the Lord allows the devil to attempt to sift us as wheat, God allows our sin pursue us.

We tend to react like the children of Israel. We panic as if God delivered us only to kill us in the wilderness. Do we really believe God our Righteous Father would give his only begotten Son to suffer under the fury of his justice to satisfy his law, to declare his righteousness, to save all his chosen people, then allow one for whom Christ died to perish in one of these lesser trials? Christ faced the greatest trial that ever existed. He bore it on behalf of his people. He divided the waters so we can go across on dry ground. That is what Christ meant when he said, "*In this world ye shall have tribulation but Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world!*" So there is no way he will allow one of his own purchased people to fall away

John 10: 28: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand. 29: My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand.

Romans 8: 31:...If God be for us, who can be against us? 32: He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

So why does God bring us into these trials? the purpose of leading us into trials, is two-fold: to make us see that we have no strength in ourselves and to remind us God in Christ is our Savior. Our redemption is accomplished—God *has* saved us. Therefore, God *is* saving us—from ourselves and this world and our idols by giving us this trial. God *shall* save us—this present trial is a lesser salvation than his cross work was—so he shall save us and bring us through whatever the present trial may be.

THE LESSON

Exodus 14: 13: And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. 14: The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.

In the midst of the trial, when the Lord has brought us to the end of ourselves, the Lord strengthens his messenger to preach this very gospel to us. This is the lesson we learn over and over.

Fear ye not. What shall we fear? Who or what is more powerful than our Redeemer? A fallen sinner is a fearful creature. Over and over Moses tells them to “fear not.” Then when Joshua takes over he tells them over and over “fear not.” When we fear man or earthly things, we exalt man more than God. We say that the thing we fear has the most power.

Isaiah 8: 10: Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God *is* with us. 11: For the LORD spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, 12: Say ye not, A confederacy, to all *them* to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. 13: Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and *let him be* your fear, and *let him be* your dread. [he should be the only one to make us tremble] 14: And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Isaiah 43:1: But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.

Stand still. There is no help in self. Leave all to God. This is the Gospel-message. There is no self-salvation. No power of man can save one soul from one sin. Cease, then, the vain attempt. Stand still before God's law and stand still in the current trial.

And see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. Christ alone has finished all the work of redemption. Alone He paid the penalty of sin. Alone He satisfied each claim of God. Alone He brought in everlasting righteousness. Alone He trod down every hindrance which guilt and hell could raise. Alone he took away our sins just like he took away the Egyptians at the red sea. This work is gloriously accomplished by Christ alone! Likewise, our deliverance from every lesser trial is by his hand alone!

The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace. "The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still. Christ is all our strength, all our victory. All creatures the least dust before Him! Who can resist when He lifts His hand? Believer, all his power is put forth to be your shield and sword. So stand behind the Lord our Redeemer and watch him save us. No need to raise the battle-cry. The charge is not ours. Let us use our breath in prayer and praise.

Throughout the old testament we find “*the Lord fought for Israel*”, “*the Lord defended Jerusalem*”, “*Israel defeated the enemy because the Lord fought for Israel*” So the Lord said in Isaiah 30,

Isaiah 30: 7:...I cried concerning this, Their strength is to sit still...15: For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength:

2 Corinthians 12: 9: And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10: Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

AMEN!