

With God Nothing is Impossible

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[0 : 00] If we could turn again for a little to Exodus chapter 14, and if we could read again verses 13 to 15.

Verses 13 to 15. 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. The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to be silent. The Lord said to Moses, why do you cry to me?

Tell the people of Israel to go forward. 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.

None of us likes to end up in a corner or find in our lives that we're kind of hemmed in, that we're in a situation where we can't see a way out.

[1 : 10] It happens quite often, and it's something that we absolutely hate, because we like to be in control of our lives. And even if we're not where we don't feel in full control, we still like to feel that there's an element of security and safety around us.

But when we, and there have been times where we come into particular situations, and we really don't know what to do, and we don't know what's going to happen.

And there are all sorts of sense of fear and maybe even panic and feeling overwhelmed. And God often allows his people to reach these places, to enter these situations, because it's in these places that God demonstrates his power and demonstrates his control and displays his love and his help to his people.

And very often, even as we look back, we realize that it was a place of blessing, even although it might have been a painful place.

And while we were in there, we might have thought it's the last thing in the world that's happening to us, that we might be saying there is no blessing. We might be actually saying, where is God in all these things?

[2 : 29] And yet God is at work. And there were moments for the Israelites when that's exactly how they felt, because they couldn't see God in the situation at all.

And they just felt utterly helpless. And they felt that their end was coming. But of course, we know that God was using this in a wonderful way.

And it's quite interesting how sometimes God, as he did in this occasion, will use the crisis that his people are in to actually overthrow the enemy that is causing the crisis.

In fact, if you go through biblical history, you will quite often find that that is the case. I suppose you can take plenty of examples. One is, for instance, you think of Haman, who his great goal was to destroy the Jews.

And he saw the man that just so got under his skin every single day, Mordecai. He built the gallows. And yes, he was going to destroy all the Jews.

[3 : 36] But Mordecai was going to hang on these high gallows. And yet we find that Mordecai is exalted and Haman swings in the gallows that he had built for Mordecai.

And God is away very often in the crisis of his people of actually delivering them and at the same time overthrowing the very ones who have been persecuting and troubling them.

And that's, of course, what we have here. It's probably one of the great examples. And, of course, Israel were taken to this place of crisis, as it's often been termed, between the devil and the deep red sea.

Now, when Israel left Egypt, it must have been quite an extraordinary sight to see. We quite often on television see people moving, particularly at a time of war and conflict, where people are having to flee their homes.

And it can be very distressing watching some of the news bulletins where we see a file, long file of people making their way just with whatever possessions that they were able to take with them. [4 : 48] And it must be one of the most harrowing experiences in life where you're ousted out of your own home and your own community. And you're having to flee for your life and grab whatever you can and go.

And so we've seen over and over and over again in different parts of this world these harrowing pictures. But this picture that we have here was very, very different because it wasn't a harrowing picture.

It was almost, you could say, a euphoric picture. Now, of course, there was a huge number of people that had gone out of Egypt. But they would have been of all ages, from grannies down to little babies, newborn babies.

But there would have been a song in their heart and a song on their lips. There would have been jubilation because after the years of slavery and infant genocide and all these things, for the first time, for a long time, for the first time that that generation had known, they were walking as free men and free women.

And it must have been quite an extraordinary march that they had down into the desert. And we find, of course, that as God leads them out, he leads them in a particular way.

[6 : 08] And God was going to lead them, as we already mentioned, into the place of an absolute predicament, which was going to demonstrate, he was going to demonstrate his glory, his power, his sovereign control, over everything, and at the same time, through this, destroy the enemy, those that were persecuting them.

And so as Israel made their way towards the Red Sea, we read of how Pharaoh and the Egyptians, when they sort of initially got over the fearful shock of the firstborn death, we find that Pharaoh says, oh, we've got to go and get them back.

And so he gets his army together, and away they go, a way to chase after Israel. And, of course, God is in this, because it keeps reminding us how God hardens his heart.

And Israel, of course, are brought into this place. And here they are, hemmed in in the wilderness. And I think it must have been one of the most terrifying situations that they find themselves in.

Because here they are, and having moved through all the jubilation and the sense of relief and the freedom that they would have experienced, although it would have been hard, going physically, demanding, going through the desert, carrying everything that they were carrying and all that.

[7 : 38] But then there's this realization that we're facing a problem. Because there, as we say, they're hemmed in in the desert, and there in front of them is the Red Sea.

And this is a kind of a situation that often confronts the Christian as we journey through life, and particularly when we feel that we are being led in the right way by God.

That as we go along and we're convinced that we are going in the way that God would have us go, then all of a sudden we find there are things happening that we didn't expect, where we're challenged.

And sometimes we come and we begin to think, right, I'm sure. I'm sure I have gone out in obedience to what God has said. I believe I'm following God's word.

Why is this happening? And quite often we find along inner Christian walk that we're challenged through these things, because often we believe that as we go in the way that God would have us go, then it's going to be plain sailing all the way.

[8 : 43] Well, it won't be. Even when we're going down, particularly, I would say, when we're going down the way that God would have us go. Because you will find that over and over again.

Remember, for instance, the Apostle Paul, when he ended up going to Philippi. And he went there under the clear instruction and command of God. And yet he ends up himself and Barnabas in the jail and the inner prison.

And that happens so often. But the beauty of Paul is he didn't question it. But sometimes we do. And I'm sure the Israelites here, they were questioning and wondering, are we going in the right direction?

What on earth is happening here? But then, of course, we see how everything turns into absolute terror. Because what they hear is this awful rumble behind them.

And they can be no doubt they'll be seeing this massive cloud of dust and this realization. Here are the Egyptians chasing after us. It must have been the most awful moment.

[9 : 47] And it tells us that in verse 10, that when Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes.

And behold, the Egyptians were marching after them. And they feared greatly. That's an understatement. And the people of Israel cried out to the Lord. Now, that's what I like. Yes, that's a natural response. They feared greatly. But they cried out to the Lord. And, you know, when we face the troubles, and even when we're going in what we believe is the right way, and these troubles and difficulties come in our way, we must always cry out to the Lord. And it doesn't have to be a great problem. But we must always be in the habit of crying out to the Lord. But you'll notice, it's very interesting what they do right after. Because in verse 11, Then they said to Moses, It is because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness.

Notice what happens. They cry to the Lord, and there is no instant deliverance. So what do they do next? They turn the blame straight away on Moses.

[11 : 09] You know, we live in a blame culture today. And we see that in all levels of society. It doesn't matter what happens. We have to find somebody to blame.

And, of course, that sin is as old as Eden. Because you remember that when God challenged Adam about why he had taken other fruit, remember Adam's reply?

He said, It's a woman. It wasn't me. It's a woman. The woman you gave me. So you see, what Adam was doing, he's blaming Eve, and he's blaming God.

Blaming Eve for having encouraged him to take the fruit, and blaming God for having given Eve.

And, of course, then Eve blames the serpent. And that blaming has gone on ever since.

But, you know, when God really shows us who we are, we don't blame anybody. You know, a great example of that is a prodigal son. You know, when the prodigal son had reached the very end, he had come to the end of himself.

[12 : 15] There was nothing left. He doesn't turn around and then blame his father and say, You know, it's your fault. If you had raised me properly, if you hadn't spoiled me, if you hadn't given me this inheritance, it's my mum's fault.

It's my brother's fault. It's my elder brother's fault. No. He doesn't turn around and blame anybody. He blames himself. And he says, Lord, I have sinned.

And that should be our response as well. Well, because far too often we're ready to point to somebody else or something else.

And it's this fault. It's that fault. That's the way society is operating now. It's always somebody else's fault. There's always a blame into something else.

The Lord is so often saying, you look to yourself. And so we find that this is what Israel do, that they turn straight away and they begin to put the blame on Moses.

[13 : 16] And, of course, then Moses, he cries to the Lord, we see. And the Lord, of course, comes with the beautiful fear knots, which is part and partial of what we find so often in God's word.

And that, you know, the Lord gives this great assurance of what he's going to do. And he says to Moses, And Moses said to the people, Fear not, stand firm and see the salvation of the Lord.

And he goes on then to say, Which he will work for you this day, For the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. And you see what happens here.

That when the Lord says, Fear not, And he says it directly or through his servant, He gives a reason why we shouldn't fear. We've often said that before.

It's of little help when you say to somebody who's beside themselves with worry. And I know we do it with the best will in the world. And we say, Oh, don't worry. It could be all right. And they'll say, How do you know it's going to be all right?

[14 : 28] And you don't know whether it's going to be all right or not. But you're just trying to comfort somebody. But if you can give a reason why it's going to be all right, Then that's great. And that's exactly what God, through Moses, is doing here.

Because he's saying, Fear not. See these Egyptians that you're petrified of. You won't see them again. After today, that's it.

So this is the reason why they're not to fear. And I love that's what God continues to do with us through his word. Because so often the fear knots that we have are accompanied by promises and exhortations.

Where God says, Don't fear because of this, because of that, because of the next thing. So we are not to fear. And we're told then to stand still or stand firm and see the salvation of the Lord.

And again, excuse me. This is again part of the wonderful thing that faith enables us to do. Is to stand still. Because when everything is going against you.

[15 : 39] And when you feel pressurized at every. You want to run this way and that. And agitation begins to start in your heart. And you become almost unreasonable and irrational.

And you want to tell people this. And go here and go there. The Lord says the very opposite. Just be quiet. Just stay still. Stand firm.

And just watch. See what I'm going to do. And so often we miss seeing what God is doing. Because we're so, so hit up. But God is of course going to demonstrate his great power.

And we see the great faith. Great faith of Moses and the great faith of Israel really. Because God says to Moses, stretch out your hand. Stretch out your rod. And he says to the children of Israel.

The command is to go forward. Now at a human level. You would say to yourself. Go forward. How can I go forward into the sea?

[16 : 41] But you know that stretching out. Moses taking the rod and stretching it out. God caused that east wind to blow all night. And separated the waters. It's the same like when Jesus said to the man with the withered hand.

Reach out your hand. Man would say. Reach out. I can't. I can't move this hand. Never moved. But faith said.

I'm listening to what. Jesus is saying. And he reached out his hand. And as he did so. He was empowered to do so. And it's the same as when Jesus said to Peter.

Come on the waters at Peter's cave. And it's that word of enabling. That enables us as well. And so it's vital that. We go forward. By faith.

And the Israelites went forward. By faith. And as they responded. Although they. Their faith. We would have to say.

[17 : 38] Was very suspect at times. And there are many things about this generation of the Israelites. It's not good. Yet there are moments along the way. There are. And we go for life.

Let's go through. You three. Move through. I bet you are. You three. Let's go through.

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