

Lesson 5 – Exodus 13-15:21

Text: Exodus 13-15:21

Main Characters: God, Moses, Pharaoh

Key Passages:

- Exodus 14:11-12 – The Israelites in the Exodus were complainers; this was only the beginning.
- Exodus 14:14 – God will fight for His people; they need only to trust in His power.

Main Storyline:

Having delivered Israel from Egypt, God gave additional commandments to Israel. First, He described the new Feast of Unleavened Bread that was to be observed annually. For seven days, the Israelites were not to eat unleavened bread or even have leaven visible in order to remember that the Lord had taken care of the Israelites when they had left Egypt. God told them to specifically teach their children about the purpose for the feast.

God also told the people that, when they arrived in Canaan, that all of their firstborns would belong to Him. God had killed all of the firstborn in Egypt, and the Israelites were to sacrifice their firstborn animals as a reminder of the Lord's power. Also, the Israelites were to redeem (buy back) their firstborn donkeys by sacrificing a lamb. They were to do the same with their firstborn sons. Again, God commanded the people to specifically teach their children about the reason for the sacrifices.

God decided not to lead the people through the land of the Philistines. This was because He did not want to scare them with a possibility of conflict and have them decide to go back to Egypt. Moses had taken Joseph's bones with him, as the people had promised to do for him when he died. God was always leading the people: by day, there was a pillar of cloud in front of the people, and by night, there was a pillar of fire to give light for the people. God told them eventually to make camp next to the sea.

In the meantime, Pharaoh and his servants had changed their minds. They believed they had made a mistake and decided to pursue Israel with all of their chariots. During the night, the Egyptians caught up to the Israelites, who were camping by the sea as God had instructed them. When the Egyptians came close, the Israelites became afraid and they cried out to God. They also complained to Moses, "Is it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us to die in the wilderness?"

Moses reassured the people that the Lord was about to deliver them once again. God told Moses to lift up his staff over the sea, and it would divide for the people. They would walk through the middle of the sea on dry land. The Egyptians would try to pursue them, but the Lord would do something to them to bring honor to His name. Then Moses obeyed, and the sea divided as God had said. The Israelites passed through the sea on dry land, but the Egyptians pursued them.

When morning broke, Israel had crossed over the sea successfully, while Egypt was still crossing. God began to confuse the armies of Egypt, and their chariots began to swerve around and were difficult to drive. At that moment, the Egyptians realized that God was still fighting for Israel against them, and they wanted to run away. It was too late, however, as God commanded Moses to stretch his hand over the sea to close the waters on the Egyptians. Moses obeyed, and the walls of water collapsed on them. In jubilation, the Israelites all began to sing a song, praising God and His supreme power.

Lessons/Applications:

- 1.) God wants us to be specific when we tell others why we serve Him (1 Peter 3:15-16).
- 2.) The wise will be as fools when confronted by the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:20-29).
- 3.) Complaining is a sin that leads to more sin; it rationalizes rebellion and takes our focus off of the good that God has done for us (Philippians 2:14).