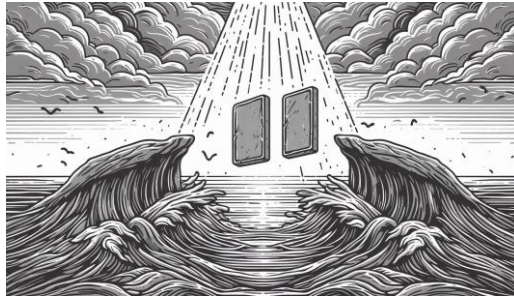


The Exodus – God saves his family



As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the Lord. They said to Moses, 'Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Didn't we say to you in Egypt, "Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians"? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!'

Moses answered the people, 'Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still.'

Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on. 16 Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground. I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them. And I will gain glory through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen. The Egyptians will know that I am the Lord when I gain glory through Pharaoh, his chariots and his horsemen.'

Then the angel of God, who had been travelling in front of Israel's army, withdrew and went behind them. The pillar of cloud also moved from in front and stood behind them, coming between the armies of Egypt and Israel. Throughout the night the cloud brought darkness to the one side and light to the other; so neither went near the other all night long.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided, and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left.

The Egyptians pursued them, and all Pharaoh's horses and chariots and horsemen followed them into the sea. During the last watch of the night the Lord looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud at the Egyptian army and threw it into confusion. He jammed the wheels of their chariots so that they had difficulty driving. And the Egyptians said, 'Let's get away from the Israelites! The Lord is fighting for them against Egypt.'

Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may flow back over the Egyptians and their chariots and horsemen.' Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at daybreak the sea went back to its place. The Egyptians were fleeing towards it, and the Lord swept them into the sea. The water flowed back and covered the chariots and horsemen – the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not one of them survived.

But the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left. That day the Lord saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. And when the Israelites saw the mighty hand of the Lord displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant.

~ Exodus 14:10-31 ~

God's family, the Israelites had been stuck as slaves in Egypt for around 400 years. But just as God had promised, he rescued them from being slaves. And now God was leading his family to the land he had promised Abraham all those years ago.

But the Pharaoh, that is the king of Egypt, didn't like the fact that all his slaves were now leaving. So he got his army together to chase down the Israelites.

It must have been scary for God's family.

In front of them was the Red Sea, too large to cross, and behind them was the Egyptian army, angry and strong.

But God is a rescuing God, and he was about to rescue his family in an amazing way.

God made the water of the Red Sea split into two, and God's family, the Israelites, were able to cross over safely on dry ground. But when the Egyptian

army tried to follow them, God caused the Red Sea to flow again, drowning them.

God saved his family!

But it wasn't just then that God saved his family. The Israelites going through the Red Sea reminds us of the greatest way God saves his family.

You see, the biggest problem for everyone isn't that there is a big, uncrossable sea in front of us and a big, angry army behind us. Rather our biggest problem is that we are separated from God because of our sin – what we think, say and do that goes against God and his way.

But just like God made it possible for the Israelites to go through the Red Sea, God has made it possible for us to come back into his family.

Jesus died and came alive again so that we can be part of God's forever family. If we trust that Jesus died in our place, we can be rescued from our sin and be brought back into God's forever family as well!

Some questions to think about:

1. How would you have felt if you were one of the Israelites with the Red Sea in front of you and the angry Egyptian army behind you?
2. How did God save the Israelites? What does this tell us about how God is and what he is like?
3. How do you feel knowing that your sin – when you think, say and do things against God and his way – separates you from God and that you too need rescuing?
4. What has God done to rescue us?
5. How does that make you feel?

Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you that you are a rescuing God. Thank you that you rescued your people, the Israelites, when the Egyptian army was chasing them. And thank you that you have provided an even bigger rescue for everyone. Thank you that Jesus died and came alive again so we can be rescued and be part of your forever family.

Amen.