Series: Surrender to Freedom

April 22, 2018

Message Three:

**From Panic to Provision**

Exodus 13:17-17

Guests - Growth Track - Generosity

Notes on Handout and in YouVersion App

**Intro:** We are teaching through the Book of Exodus - the second book of the Bible - written by Moses. It is primarily the story of the Hebrew people begin set free from slavery in Egypt. They were slaves there for 430 years.

They really had no national identity. They really knew little to nothing about God. They were called upon to trust a leader they really didn’t know, who hadn’t lived with them for 40 years, and before that he lived in the Pharoah’s house, and the Pharaoh was the Egyptian king and their chief oppressor.

So, you can understand that they had some trust issues.

This month the passages we are looking at focus on Surrendering to Freedom.

In the first message, from Exodus 5-10, we learned that when God wants to do something, resistance is futile. He gives us a choice whether or not to serve Him, whether or not to follow Him, but the option to not follow Him does not lead to a good result.

* God loves His people.
* God protects His people.
* God keeps His promises to His people.

He is a good God!

Last week - we found out in chapters 11 through the first part of chapter 13 that our response to Him should be surrender -

* Without surrender, there will be death.
* Jesus Himself surrendered to the point of death - for us!
* We must surrender to escape eternal spiritual death.
* Surrender leads to freedom!

Pharaoh refused to surrender … led to the plagues …

Ultimately, after many warnings, his refusal to cooperate with God led to the death of every firstborn child in Egypt - it was a horrible night.

He gave the Israelites a plan to escape this judgment in their homes -

Passover …

It is true for us, that God’s plan for our lives is a good, loving plan. If we don’t surrender to that plan, if we rebel against that plan, there will be eternal spiritual death for us.

God sent a lamb … His blood was shed … we apply that blood to our lives - receive His forgiveness, and we can escape the eternal death and separation from the presence of God.

Pharaoh finally relented - the end of ch. 13 tells us that God did not lead the people on a direct route. A direct route would take them through Philistine territory. Again, God loves and God cares. He knew that if they went through Philistine territory they would have to face a military battle that they were not ready for - so -

He led them to the Red Sea -

This looked bad - but it was good!

**Big Idea: God wants to take us from places of panic, to places of provision, protection and praise!**

It looked like they had no place to go …

Exodus 14:4 - … I have planned this in order to display my glory through Pharaoh and his whole army. After this the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord!”…

**> God wants the whole world to know Him and to know His glory!**

Remember David and Goliath - that the world may know ….

Isaiah 45:6 - so all the world from east to west

will know there is no other God.

I am the Lord, and there is no other.

John 6:51 - I am *the* living bread that came down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live forever; and this bread, which I will offer so *the* *world* *may* live, is my flesh.

Mark 16:15 - And then he told them, “Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone.

He leads His people to the Red Sea … into what looks like a trap - a horrible situation - but God has a plan! He wants to use His people to show His power and love to those who don’t yet know Him!

When you are facing a horrible situation - an impossible situation - and it looks like God has led you there - don’t get mad at God! Look for the plan of God to show forth His glory and His power to others through the situation!

1st Corinthians 10:13 - The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure.

Acts 12 - Peter was in prison - thought he was going to die the next day - sleeping like a baby - angel comes and delivers him - the church was praying, but not believing -

Not much different than the Israelites by the Red Sea!

Exodus 14:10-14 - As Pharaoh approached, the people of Israel looked up and panicked when they saw the Egyptians overtaking them. They cried out to the Lord, and they said to Moses, “Why did you bring us out here to die in the wilderness? Weren’t there enough graves for us in Egypt? What have you done to us? Why did you make us leave Egypt? Didn’t we tell you this would happen while we were still in Egypt? We said, ‘Leave us alone! Let us be slaves to the Egyptians. It’s better to be a slave in Egypt than a corpse in the wilderness!’”

 But Moses told the people, “Don’t be afraid. Just stand still and watch the Lord rescue you today. The Egyptians you see today will never be seen again. The Lord himself will fight for you. Just stay calm.”

**> If we let Him, God will fight our battles for us!**

God fights our battles for us …

Jehovah Nissi …

Exodus 14:15-31 -Then the Lord said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to me? Tell the people to get moving! Pick up your staff and raise your hand over the sea. Divide the water so the Israelites can walk through the middle of the sea on dry ground. And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they will charge in after the Israelites. My great glory will be displayed through Pharaoh and his troops, his chariots, and his charioteers. When my glory is displayed through them, all Egypt will see my glory and know that I am the Lord!”

 Then the angel of God, who had been leading the people of Israel, moved to the rear of the camp. The pillar of cloud also moved from the front and stood behind them. The cloud settled between the Egyptian and Israelite camps. As darkness fell, the cloud turned to fire, lighting up the night. But the Egyptians and Israelites did not approach each other all night.

 Then Moses raised his hand over the sea, and the Lord opened up a path through the water with a strong east wind. The wind blew all that night, turning the seabed into dry land. So the people of Israel walked through the middle of the sea on dry ground, with walls of water on each side!

 Then the Egyptians—all of Pharaoh’s horses, chariots, and charioteers—chased them into the middle of the sea. But just before dawn the Lord looked down on the Egyptian army from the pillar of fire and cloud, and he threw their forces into total confusion. He twisted their chariot wheels, making their chariots difficult to drive. “Let’s get out of here—away from these Israelites!” the Egyptians shouted. “The Lord is fighting for them against Egypt!”

 When all the Israelites had reached the other side, the Lord said to Moses, “Raise your hand over the sea again. Then the waters will rush back and cover the Egyptians and their chariots and charioteers.” So as the sun began to rise, Moses raised his hand over the sea, and the water rushed back into its usual place. The Egyptians tried to escape, but the Lord swept them into the sea. Then the waters returned and covered all the chariots and charioteers—the entire army of Pharaoh. Of all the Egyptians who had chased the Israelites into the sea, not a single one survived.

 But the people of Israel had walked through the middle of the sea on dry ground, as the water stood up like a wall on both sides. That is how the Lord rescued Israel from the hand of the Egyptians that day. And the Israelites saw the bodies of the Egyptians washed up on the seashore. When the people of Israel saw the mighty power that the Lord had unleashed against the Egyptians, they were filled with awe before him. They put their faith in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

When you read through the Old Testament you find that this story is repeated over and over again - I think more than any other. The people needed to be constantly reminded of how great God was - how much He loved them - how He had power to overcome any obstacle they faced.

Do you need to be reminded of that today?

What are you facing that is like the Red Sea?

What are you facing that is like a mighty army?

Do you feel powerless?

If you will let Him - trust Him & obey Him - this same God will fight for you!

*Got any rivers you think are uncrossable?*

*God any mountains you can’t tunnel through?*

*God specializes in things thought impossible.*

*And He can do what no other power can do!*

*Trust & Obey*

*When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word,*

*What a glory He sheds on our way!*

*While we do His good will, He abides with us still,*

*And with all who will trust and obey.*

*Refrain:*

*Trust and obey, for there’s no other way*

*To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.*

*Not a shadow can rise, not a cloud in the skies,*

*But His smile quickly drives it away;*

*Not a doubt or a fear, not a sigh or a tear,*

*Can abide while we trust and obey.*

**> We should always remember to praise Him for His help.**

Exodus 15 -

They took time to sing a song of praise -

Exodus 15:2 - he Lord is my strength and my song; he has given me victory.

This is my God, and I will praise him— my father’s God, and I will exalt him!

Exodus 15:13 - With your unfailing love you lead the people you have redeemed. In your might, you guide them to your sacred home.

**> Don’t be quick to complain.**

Exodus 15:22-27 -

They get past the Red Sea - start moving through the desert - three days without water - that’s tough I’ll give you that -

When they finally come to some water - it’s bitter -

Exodus 15:24 - Then the people complained and turned against Moses. “What are we going to drink?” they demanded.

After all God had done to deliver them from Egypt - after what He had done at the Red Sea - they are so quick to complain!

Think of all God has done for us - yet are we quick to complain when the first thing goes wrong!

God tells Moses to take a piece of wood and throw it in the water - he does and the water is good to drink!

**Our problems seem huge to us - they are simple to God!**

Trust! Ultimately, our complaining is birthed out of a lack of trust in the goodness of God, the kindness of God, and the power of God!

Exodus 16 - still nothing changes -

Exodus 16:3 - “If only the Lord had killed us back in Egypt,” they moaned. “There we sat around pots filled with meat and ate all the bread we wanted. But now you have brought us into this wilderness to starve us all to death.”

Yes - but you were slaves! You were being beaten! You were being abused! Your children were being raised in slavery!

There are people who prefer the slavery of sin, and the dull life of complacency, to the sometimes challenging and exciting life of following the Lord! But the dull life is death!

Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego …

Some people would rather be in the fire with God, than out of the fire without Him!

God sent manna every morning … “What is it?”

And God sent quail every evening …

It was miraculous! What a good God!

Are we looking for the miraculous provision of God in our lives? Are we expecting - or are we complaining?

In ch. 17 - they got thirsty again - they complained again - God provided again.

Exodus 17:5-6 - The Lord said to Moses, “Walk out in front of the people. Take your staff, the one you used when you struck the water of the Nile, and call some of the elders of Israel to join you. I will stand before you on the rock at Mount Sinai. Strike the rock, and water will come gushing out. Then the people will be able to drink.” So Moses struck the rock as he was told, and water gushed out as the elders looked on.

**> God wants the whole world to know Him and to know His glory!**

**> If we let Him, God will fight our battles for us!**

**> We should always remember to praise Him for His help.**

**> Don’t be quick to complain.**

**> God is our Protector**

As they are traveling, they run into the Amalekites and have to have their first military battle. They learn what we should learn -

When we are fighting a battle, we should trust God to do the fighting for us.

Exodus 17:10-13 - So Joshua did what Moses had commanded and fought the army of Amalek. Meanwhile, Moses, Aaron, and Hur climbed to the top of a nearby hill. As long as Moses held up the staff in his hand, the Israelites had the advantage. But whenever he dropped his hand, the Amalekites gained the advantage. Moses’ arms soon became so tired he could no longer hold them up. So Aaron and Hur found a stone for him to sit on. Then they stood on each side of Moses, holding up his hands. So his hands held steady until sunset. As a result, Joshua overwhelmed the army of Amalek in battle.

This is a picture of those who hold the office of deacon - but this ministry does not have to be limited to those who hold the office of deacon.

We will win more victories for God, when the people support God-given and God-directed leadership.

I need your prayers. This gets weary. This gets tired -

And the complaining … yes, it happens here too.

Lincoln: *You can please some of the people some of the time, all of the people some of the time, some of the people all of the time, but you can never please all of the people all of the time.*

There are times I’ve taken issue with the second phrase of that quote - because I’m note even sure you can please all of the people some of the time.

Unity is hard to achieve and hard to maintain. Unity comes when we don’t fight for our agenda, but we find out what God’s agenda is and we fight for that.

This is hard for pastors to say - many pastors unfortunately have failed in a number of ways …

But some of us had a holy moment years ago … God called us … we still rely on God completely and totally for wisdom and direction…. I am not perfect, but I am doing my best to try to find out what God wants to do -

It may not be what you want to do - it may not be what has always been done before -

But there are lost people who don’t know anything about what we’ve done before and won’t relate to it. We have to find new ways of reaching them -

And I need people to hold up my arms. If that doesn’t happen, the battle is over.

Hebrews 13:7 - Remember your leaders who taught you the word of God. Think of all the good that has come from their lives, and follow the example of their faith.

Here’s the verse that gives us the name of God I mentioned earlier -

Exodus 17:15 - Moses built an altar there and named it Yahweh-Nissi (which means “the Lord is my banner”).

He leads the way - we rely on Him!

**Invitation** - if watching by video pray with us.

Connection Card - if watching on video - let me know via email.

**Blessing**