



## Studies in the Book of Exodus

Text

Exodus 14:14-31

Topic

An enraged Pharaoh follows the Israelites into the Red Sea  
thereby sending his forces to their death

Title

*"Madman Across the Water"*

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Who is from Missouri? (Missouree). Or should I say, Missouruh?

The pronunciation became a major issue in a recent campaign for governor. Then Governor Jay Nixon endured accusations of flip-flopping, not on the major issues, but for using both pronunciations in a virtual one-to-one ratio, sometimes in the same sentence.

His opponent, Dave Spence, said he was more consistent, exclusively using the Missouree pronunciation. But he caught flak when a video clip featured the candidate's wife saying "he's going to be a great governor for the state of Missouruh."

A reporter commented, “Most of the state’s top officials stick mostly to Missouree, but they sprinkle the other ending into the occasional speech, especially when they’re introducing themselves or speaking to rural audiences. Strategists say that’s just good Missouri manners.”

One thing all Missourians agree upon is the unofficial state slogan. You probably know it: *The Show-Me State*. The state website says, “Show-me describes the character of Missourians; not gullible, conservative, and unwilling to believe without adequate evidence.”

The Red Sea crossing of Israel, and the pursuit of the Egyptian army, is a biblical “show-me.” I think it perfectly illustrates something we read regarding our salvation in Jesus Christ in the New Testament letter to the Colossians:

Col 1:13 He has **delivered us from** the power of darkness and **conveyed us into** the kingdom of the Son of His love,

The Israelites had been powerfully *delivered* from the power and dominion of Pharaoh and Egypt. Crossing the Red Sea safely, they were being *conveyed* along to the Promised Land.

But more than the obvious, the crossing illustrates spiritual truths for *all* believers at *all* times:

- Being rescued from Egypt the way they were, by the blood of a substituted lamb, illustrates being delivered by God from Satan and sin.
- Miraculously crossing the Red Sea onto the opposite shore illustrates being supernaturally “conveyed” onward to the Kingdom of God.

If you're a Christian, you've been delivered, and you've been conveyed. Keep that in mind as our point of contact with this incredible story.

I'll organize my comments around two points: #1 Keep Looking Forward At The Kingdom Into Which You've Been Received, and #2 Take A Look Back At The Kingdom From Which You've Been Rescued.

## #1 Keep Looking Forward At The Kingdom Into Which You've Been Received

(14-22)

When a Christian refers to "the Kingdom," or "the Kingdom of God," exactly what does he or she mean?

There are three ways we speak about the Kingdom of God.

First, the Kingdom of God is the rule of the eternal, sovereign God over all the universe He has created. In Psalm 103:19 we read, "The LORD has established His throne in Heaven, **And His kingdom rules over all.**"

Second, the Bible describes the Kingdom of God as the spiritual rule over the hearts and lives of those who willingly submit to His authority. One site said (and I quote),

That the kingdom of God can be equated with salvation is evident in John 3:5-7, where Jesus says the kingdom of God must be entered into by being born again.

The Kingdom of God is His rule over *creation*, and it is His rule over His new *creatures* in Jesus Christ.

There is a third way the Bible speaks of the Kingdom of God. God has unconditionally promised the nation of Israel that they will experience a future, physical Kingdom of God on this earth, with Jesus ruling over it from David's throne in Jerusalem. The prophet Daniel said that "the God of Heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed" (2:4).

We often call this future reign of Jesus the Millennial Kingdom, because in the Book of the Revelation, in chapter twenty, we're told at least six times it will last for "a thousand years."

- It has a very distinct beginning - the Second Coming of Jesus to the earth with His saints.
- It has a very dramatic end - the final judgment of Satan and all nonbelievers from all of human history; and,
- It endures from beginning to end for a literal thousand years.

Putting all three explanations of the Kingdom of God together we say:

1. God is in charge of the universe.
2. Jesus is coming back a second time to fulfill the promises of the Kingdom on earth.
3. As we wait for Him, the kingdom of God is His spiritual rule over those who are saved.

There is, simultaneously, another "kingdom" at work:

- Satan is referred to as "the god of this world" (Second Corinthians 4:4).
- Satan is called the "prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2).
- He is given the title, "ruler of this world" (John 12:31).

In First John 5:19 we read, "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one."

In the desert temptation, Satan offered Jesus all the kingdoms of this world if the Lord would bow-down and worship him. The Lord declined, but He did not dispute Satan's claim over the kingdoms of the world as the god of this world.

On the Cross at Calvary, Jesus defeated Satan, conquering sin and death at the same time. But seeing He was rejected by the Jewish officials, the establishment of the Kingdom of God on the earth was postponed. When Jesus returns, in His Second Coming, the Revelation proclaims, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"

God is in charge, but in His longsuffering, not wanting any to perish, He tolerates Satan and his evil empire. Defeated, the devil fights on. His fate, however, has been determined:

- At the Second Coming of Jesus, he will be incarcerated for the thousand years in a place called the Abyss.
- At the end of the thousand years, he will be cast alive into the Lake of Fire to spend eternity in conscious torment.

We are participants in the spiritual kingdom of God as He rules over us, but we live in a world whose god is the devil.

In the crossing of the Red Sea our salvation is illustrated as we see the Israelites first rescued from Egypt, then conveyed to the far shore. It's like our being rescued from Satan and sin to be conveyed to Heaven.

We're picking-up the story in verse fourteen. Israel is trapped between the devil and the deep Red Sea, with mountains on both sides, and an uncrossable body of water ahead of them. The Egyptian armored forces are barreling down upon them, to destroy them.

Exo 14:14 The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace."

God had positioned them in such a way that they were powerless and helpless on their own. There was nothing they could do or say to save themselves.

Men must be rescued from the kingdom of Satan. We cannot help ourselves. Only Jesus can bind the strong man and save those held captive by him and kept blinded in the dark.

Exo 14:15 And the LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward.

Moses had been praying. That was good, as far as it went. God told Moses the time for praying was over; it was a time for doing.

As believers, we should have times we set aside for prayer. We should often pray with, and for, one another. And we should be praying at all times - communing and having fellowship with God in our hearts.

There are times when praying is a stall tactic. One writer said, "There comes a moment when praying becomes a form of spiritual procrastination. It's time to stop praying and start acting."

If you know something needs to be done, and it is something good, then you may not need to pray about it. And you certainly need to do more than pray about it.

Think of some of the things you might be sincerely praying about. Is it in your power to help? To meet the need? To participate? To serve? To give? To go?

Perhaps today God is saying to **you**, *right now*, “Why do you cry to Me? Go forward.” The “staff” is in your hand.

Exo 14:16 But lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry *ground* through the midst of the sea.

This would not have been my first choice. How about God just rains hailstones down on the enemy? Or some other method in which I was a spectator, *not* a participant.

It’s never about defeating the enemy. That’s easy for God. It’s about you and I growing in faith. We are His great workmanship, and He takes every opportunity to create us more in the image of Jesus.

Exo 14:17 And I indeed will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them. So I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, his chariots, and his horsemen.

Every time we see God “harden the hearts,” I feel obligated to remind you that what is meant is that He allows folks to follow the dictates of their own will. In this case, He allowed the Egyptians to follow their rage into the water.

If the wrath of men is what they offer God, He can use even that to His “honor.”

Exo 14:18 Then the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have gained honor for Myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen."

You'd think that by now the Egyptians would know that Israel's God *was* God. Over a period of eight months they'd had a series of ten incredible wonders performed before their very eyes.

Really, what more could God have done to reveal Himself to them?

If men and women do not get saved, it isn't for lack of effort on God's part:

- Creation reveals God to everyone, everywhere.
- The Gospel is presented in the heavens, in the form of the constellations that the ancients called the *Mazzeroth*.
- He has placed “eternity in [our] hearts,” the Bible says in Ecclesiastes 3:11. We take that to correspond to what the apostle Paul said on Mars Hill, that “[God] has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us...” (Acts 17:26-27).

Dr. Stephen Hawking died this week at age 76. He had this to say about death:



“I regard the brain as a computer which will stop working when its components fail. There is no Heaven or afterlife for broken down computers; that is a fairy story for people afraid of the dark.”

Hawking also said, "One can't prove that God doesn't exist, but science makes God unnecessary."

“Spontaneous creation is the reason there is something rather than nothing, why the universe exists, why we exist,” he wrote in his celebrated book, *The Grand Design*.

There is a “grand [intelligent] design” - *but no Designer?* It’s not a tenable position. There is plenty of evidence that God is reaching-out to mankind.

Exo 14:19 And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them.

The “Angel of the Lord” is an Old Testament (more accurately, a pre-incarnate) appearance of Jesus Christ in some form. Here it seems we are to understand that Jesus was the “pillar” that had been leading Israel.

Twice God said He would gain “honor.” He had positioned Israel in a way that their circumstances would reveal His glory.

We took a long look at this last study. We won’t always know, this side of Heaven, how certain of our circumstances bring God glory. We’re to trust and believe that they do, or that they will.

Exo 14:20 So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus it was a cloud and darkness *to the one*, and it gave light by night *to the other*, so that the one did not come near the other all that night.

There was a clear separation between the two groups. One was a kingdom enshrouded in darkness. The other, a kingdom of light.

When Jesus came to earth the first time, He said to Nicodemus, "... the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19).

Exo 14:21 Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry *land*, and the waters were divided.

It's no less a miracle because God utilized Moses' staff and "a strong east wind."

God does not work alone; God works through the instrumentality of both human and nonhuman powers to accomplish the divine purpose.

Exo 14:22 So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry *ground*, and the waters *were* a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

It's been estimated the crossing would have taken nine hours if the Israelites numbered 2million. We think there is good evidence they numbered more like 6million.

This was no dash across; it took considerable time - during which walls of swirling water were on either side.

There was only one way to go, and that was forward on the path the Lord had chosen for them.

There is only one way to go, and that is forward on the path the Lord has chosen for you.

Your path may be up to the high places. It may be through the valley of the shadow of death. Job cried out, “though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him” (13:15).

Whether you are in a time of peril or of prosperity; whether you are being buffeted or blessed; your path leads forward to the coming of the Lord.

Keep looking forward to the Kingdom of God.

## #2 Take A Look Back

At The Kingdom From Which You've Been Rescued

(23-31)

I usually counsel folks to keep their before-Christ days in the rear view mirror. Giving your testimony is one thing; dwelling on your sinful past is another.

There is a way of taking a look back that can be helpful to your walk. The apostle Paul put it like this:

1Co 6:9 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites,

1Co 6:10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

1Co 6:11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

What a great perspective! Call your past what it was, then see that it pales in comparison to walking in a relationship with the living God.

If you're not careful, you might sometimes catch yourself thinking that you were abducted from your former life. It can seem as though it was more fun in the kingdom of darkness.

You weren't abducted; you were rescued. If you can't have wholesome fun in the Kingdom of God; if you're always longing for the garlic in Egypt; that's your sin nature raising-up its ugly head.

Exo 14:23 And the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

I love those old gangster films where all the bank robber had to do to avoid capture was to cross over state lines.

God had definitely drawn a line in the dry sand of the Red Sea. But Pharaoh crossed it. He was bent on destroying Israel. He was blinded by sin - a captive of the devil, to do Satan's will.

Exo 14:24 Now it came to pass, in the morning watch, that the LORD looked down upon the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and He troubled the army of the Egyptians.

Exo 14:25 And He took off their chariot wheels, so that they drove them with difficulty; and the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians."

Psalm 77 is helpful here:

Psa 77:16 The waters saw You, O God; The waters saw You, they were afraid; The depths also trembled.

Psa 77:17 The clouds poured out water; The skies sent out a sound; Your arrows also flashed about.

Psa 77:18 The voice of Your thunder was in the whirlwind; The lightnings lit up the world; The earth trembled and shook.

God unleashed a spectacular display of thunder, lightning, rain, and earthquake. The noises would have been deafening as well. It was sufficient that Egypt's charioteers were struck with terror.

As if that wasn't enough, God made the chariot wheels "come off" (NIV), or "jam," against one another, so that the Egyptians had difficulty driving.

The Egyptians realized that they had made a grave error, but it was too late.

Exo 14:26 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may come back upon the Egyptians, on their chariots, and on their horsemen."

How large was this armored force? We described in our last study that the 600 "choice chariots" were ridden by three soldiers. So that's 1800 armed men. There's no way of knowing how many regular chariots, ridden by two soldiers, there were.

Let's be super conservative and say there were 5000 Egyptians on chariots.

Exo 14:27 And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and when the morning appeared, the sea returned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing into it. So the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.

Exo 14:28 Then the waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen, *and* all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. Not so much as one of them remained.

There were "horsemen" as well as chariots; and there appears to have been an "army" on foot. This was a huge force.

On October 24, 2014, the web site *World News Daily Report* published an article reporting that chariot wheels and the bones of horses and men had been discovered at the bottom of the Red Sea, thereby providing archaeological proof of the Biblical account.

**It's not true.** It was recycled fake news from previous fake news.

*World News Daily Report* has this disclaimer on their web page:

We assume all responsibility for the satirical nature of our articles and for the fictional nature of their content. All characters appearing in the articles in this website - even those based on real people - are entirely fictional and any resemblance between them and any persons, living, dead, or undead is purely a miracle.

Be careful surfing that thar' Inter Web.

Exo 14:29 But the children of Israel had walked on dry *land* in the midst of the sea, and the waters *were* a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

Exo 14:30 So the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore.

There's some debate over whether or not Pharaoh died. Psalm 136:15 indicates he did die when it says, "[God] overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea..."

"Overthrew," however, doesn't conclusively mean he died along with the others. We just don't know for certain.

Bible teachers frequently refer to, and quote, first century Jewish historian, Josephus. In his account of the Red Sea crossing, Josephus says that the wind turned around and blew the bodies of the drowned corpses to the eastern shore so that Moses could obtain the weapons and armor for the Israelites.

Exo 14:31 Thus Israel saw the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt; so the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD and His servant Moses.

I wonder if God was the first one to say, "I love it when a plan comes together." This one certainly did.

Israel looked back upon the kingdom they had been rescued from. Mighty Egypt - a world ruling empire. Wealthy. Powerful.

In reality, what characterized Egypt is what characterizes every kingdom ruled by the god of this world: "fornicators... idolaters..."

adulterers... homosexuals... sodomites... thieves... covetous... drunkards... revilers... extortioners...”

We read those words earlier as the apostle Paul described the Corinthian culture.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ rescues you from all that, and you are received into a new way of life, with Jesus ruling your heart.

“And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.”

If you're not a believer, you are a blind captive in Satan's dark kingdom. “The light shines in the darkness” (John 1:5) whenever the Gospel is presented to you.

You say, “show-me and I'll believe?” **He has shown you** - in creation, in the heavens, and by placing eternity in your heart.

The greatest intellect of our time knew there was a design to the universe. The design reveals the Designer - Jesus Christ.