

Exodus 13:17–14:14

“Right Where God Wants Us”

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¹⁷ Then it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, “Lest perhaps the people change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt.” ¹⁸ So God led the people around by way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of Israel went up in orderly ranks out of the land of Egypt.

¹⁹ And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had placed the children of Israel under solemn oath, saying, “God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here with you.”

²⁰ So they took their journey from Succoth and camped in Etham at the edge of the wilderness. ²¹ And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night. ²² He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night from before the people.

^{14:1} Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ² “Speak to the children of Israel, that they turn and camp before Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, opposite Baal Zephon; you shall camp before it by the sea. ³ For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, ‘They are bewildered by the land; the wilderness has closed them in.’ ⁴ Then I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, so that he will pursue them; and I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, that the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD.” And they did so.

⁵ Now it was told the king of Egypt that the people had fled, and the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against the people; and they said, “Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?” ⁶ So he made ready his chariot and took his people with him. ⁷ Also, he took six hundred choice chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt with captains over every one of them. ⁸ And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the children of Israel; and the children of Israel went out with boldness. ⁹ So the Egyptians pursued them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, his horsemen and his army, and overtook them camping by the sea beside Pi Hahiroth, before Baal Zephon.

¹⁰ And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians marched after them. So they were very afraid, and the children of Israel cried out to the LORD. ¹¹ Then they said to Moses, “Because there were no graves in Egypt, have you taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you so dealt with us, to bring us up out of Egypt? ¹² Is this not the word that we told you in Egypt, saying, ‘Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness.”

¹³ And Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever.

¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.”

Main Idea: God has His people right where He wants them with regard for their weakness, with regard for their enemies' wickedness, with regard for their own wickedness, and with regard for His worship.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

Exodus 13 beginning in verse 17. And going through chapter 14, verse 14. These are God's words, then it came to pass when Pharaoh had let the people go that God did not lead them by way of the land of fleistons. Although that was near for God said, lest perhaps the people change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt.

So God led the people round by the way, of the wilderness of the Red Sea and the children of Israel went up and orderly ranks out of the land of Egypt and Moses took the bones of Joseph with him for he had placed the children of Israel under Solomnath saying God will sorely visit you and usual carry up my bones from here with you.

And so they took their journey from Succoth and camped in Etham at the edge of the wilderness and Yahweh went before them by day. In a pillar of cloud to lead the way. And by night in a pillar of fire to give them light. So as to go by day and night, he did not take away the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night from before the people.

Now, you always spoke to Moses saying, speak to the children of Israel that they turn and camp before Bihavi rav between Miguel and the sea opposite bows upon, you shall camp before it by the sea. For Pharaoh will say, of the children of Israel. They are bewildered by the land.

The wilderness has closed them in, Then I will harden, Pharaoh's heart, so that he will pursue them. And I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army. That the Egyptians may know that I am Yahweh and they did. So Now it was told the king of Egypt that the people had fled and the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against the people.

And they said, why have we done this that we have let Israel go from serving us So he made ready his chariot and took his people with him. Also, he took 600 choice chariots and all the chariots of Egypt with captains over every one of them. And you all way, hardened, the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt and he pursued the children of Israel and the children of Israel went out with boldness.

So the Egyptians pursued them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, His horseman and his army and overtook them camping by the sea beside P Huroth. Before bells upon, and when Pharaoh drew near the children of Israel, lifted their eyes and behold The Egyptians marched after them. So they were very afraid and the children of Israel cried out to y'all way.

And they said to Moses Because there were no graves in Egypt, if you taken us away to die in a wilderness. Why have you so dealt with us to bring us up out of Egypt Is this? Not the word that we told you in Egypt saying let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians for it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that.

We should die in the wilderness and Moses said, to the people, Do not be afraid stand still, and see the salvation of Yahweh, which he will accomplish for you today for the Egyptians whom you see today. You shall see again? No more forever. He also will fight for you and you shall hold your peace So far.

The reading of God's inspired in an errant worked.

Pharaoh, when he hears about where the Israelites are in. Camped. He says, as the Lord, of course, tells us in verse 3, that he will say, the children of Israel, they are bewildered by the land, the wilderness has closed them in. In other words, Pharaoh will say, I've got the Israelites right where I walk them.

And unfortunately, the Israelites, although God tells them beforehand, that this is going to happen. They say, oh no, Pharaoh has us right? Where he wants us. And then they tell Moses, why didn't you take us right where we wanted. But the point of this passage is that the Lord has everyone right?

Where he wants them, The Lord has his people right where he wants them with respect for their weakness. If you were to Google Maps, your route from Egypt to Canaan. You'd go by way of the Philistines That was what you know it wouldn't matter whether you had selected shortest route, fastest route or the increasingly dubious, most fuel economic or earth.

Flood friendly route, it would all go by way of the Philistines problem was these people were slaves until yesterday and the Philistines are warrior type people. And the Lord knows. His people are are weak and he says less perhaps. The people change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt and it's not like God doesn't know what the people are about to say, in a few verses changing their minds.

And you know, saying they wish they were in Egypt. It's the Lord's gentleness. He knows what is hard on you and he has us right? Where he wants us with respect to our weakness. Not only in our circumstances, not only in his providence, but also in his presence Though, the nation of Israel took the treasures of the world out of Egypt with them.

We've noted that a couple of times recently. It's not the greatest treasure. That went out with them from Egypt. We're actually well prepared by having heard first group first, king, six breached Friday evening. To notice the massive change that takes place in verse 21 and 22. Because for 430 years up until the day that they left on that very day.

You remember, The Lord had appeared to his people in moments to one person on one occasion in a vision, or a dream or a bush at one point. But now he was with his people leading the way 24/7. Quite literally, he went before them by day, in a pillar of cloud to lead the way by night in a pillar of fire to give them light.

So, as to go by day and night, he did not take away the pillar of cloud by day, or pillar of fire by night from before the people. So, he accommodates their weakness, not only in his circumst in their circumstances, and in, or in his providence, and in his prescriptions, the way that he tells them to go, but also, by, by his presence, that's the Lord has them, right?

Where he wants them with respect to their weakness, The Lord has has them right where he wants them with respect to Egypt's wickedness. It's ironic isn't it. When Pharaoh says, haha, I have them right where I want them. Why? Because that's exactly what God told His people that Pharaoh would do.

He fell for the gambit. I don't know how much into Chester the into chess kids are, but there are in in chess Gambits, which usually involve a sacrifice You want the other person to think that they have you right where you want them. But thinking that they have you, right, where they want them is right, where you want them.

And that's the way it always is with the Lord and the wicked of this world. They are raging against him on earth and he is, I think at them from heaven, They are digging pits and he has ordained that they will follow them. They are setting traps and he is ordained that the traps will spring upon them and he says, I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army and I hope you caught all those all.

The only thing left in Egypt, right? Their fields are gone. Their cattle are gone because they just got done telling Pharaoh, we're all dead. Basically, the only thing they have left is their army, their chariots, and their horses and their commanders. And now the Lord is going to wipe those out too.

Don't ever look that the providence of God and the wicked seeming to prosper. You know, we love to sing it from Psalm 73. We've just heard three glorious weeks of it. In Psalm 37. Don't ever look at that. And be discouraged. God always as the wicked, right? Where he wants them even when the devil has Christ in the wilderness and says, ah, right where I want him starving, and in the wilderness, Jesus is exercising his perfect activity.

Obedience. That is counted for us when we believe it in and the devil is the occasion for it, right? When the devil has, what the Scripture calls the more opportune time, Remember he leaves Jesus alone until he's going to attack him at a more opportune time and then we see him again, where entering Judas at the Last Supper, and he thinks it's his opportune time, but the devil's opportune time was the Lord's fullness of time and the Lord Jesus died.

And offered his passes obedience to atone for our wickedness. So God has His people right where he wants them with respect to their wickedness, by his providence, by his prescription by his presence. God has the wicked the the world right where he wants them with respect to their wickedness, God has His people right where he wants them with respect to their own wickedness and the people of God go out and it says with oh, how was it translated with uplifted fist?

I can't remember what verse that was. There one. All right. I'm not seeing it Anyway. I don't remember what the with the New King James had said, but the Hebrew was with uplifted fist, they had gone. And you might think that they had all this confidence in God and we often in God-giving us a great deliverance or victory over sin or helping us string together.

A few days of moderately increased faithfulness and his great mercy to us and we get full of ourselves. And yet we have all of this remaining wickedness. And what do we need? We need God in His sanctifying mercy, to give us an occasion for it to come out. And we say, oh not all, I didn't mean that I'm so sorry.

But oh, part of the overflow of my heart. I just spoke again and there's more in my heart than I know before. And so he says can't between bellsophon and Pihadi Roth and they can't between bowels upon and Piroth. And it is the most indefensible location that you could pick.

There's nothing nothing really on your sides. And you know, for for cover, and you're up against the sea and everyone knows you can't go into the sea and Pharaohs. That was supposed to make you smile with delicious irony children because everyone knows you can't go into the sea, but we all know that God can take his people through the sea.

And sometimes we need for the Lord to bring us into a situation where It's exposed how unbelieving we still are and how grumbly and complaining we still are. And notice Versen says that they cried out to Yale. And then they said to Moses, um, and then Moses respond the next week's passive starts.

And Yahweh said to Moses. Why do you cry to me? You see, they're grumbling was against Moses, but even they knew I'll look at. That would be. And so they complained to Moses. Oh, dear. Children and congregants, and all of us, how often we indulge a grumbling spirit and address someone lesser than God to give us the illusion of not really complaining against His providence, The complain against your parents.

But God bitched your parents complain against her but God picked your husband complain against your elders that isn't God's providence of. Those are the elders you've got now, it's not wrong to to take up something with someone who's in authority over you and make known to them. You know, your difficulty or inquire of them, ask them for more help.

However, it is but the complaining spirit, the grumbling spirit. You can see and hear it in the way they talk to Moses that you may not allow yourself to have against a man because when you have it against a man you have it against God and are maybe just too sophisticated to let yourself express it directly to God.

So he has his people were. He wants them with respect to their own wickedness but he also has everyone where he wants them with respect to his worship. He's not just destroying what remains of Egypt His declaring his name that the Egyptians may know that I am Yahweh verse 4.

The Lord was glorifying his name and so he was making the Egyptians know that he was Yahweh. As you know this the Israelites were sprinkled in the Red Sea as a were baptized into Moses, but the Egyptians were immersed. Same thing with the flood by the way baptism now saves us in a context where God is saying.

He knows how to how to curse some and preserve others at the same time and if you're cursed, you receive immersion. And if you are being preserved, you get sprinkled in the ark. It's not entirely tongue in cheek Baptist and making a point. A lot of reform baptism sermon audio.

Write me. I would love to discuss with you but he's giving the the Egyptians a front row seat for the final act of God's glory over Egypt, You know, who else? As a front row, seat. So Israelites, That's where they're going. Where are we going other side of the sea?

What are we gonna do there? We're gonna watch God destroy the Egyptians, In fact, that's what, that's what Moses to the people. Don't be afraid, stand still and see the salvation of Yahweh. You walk in the way that he says to walk. You go to the place that he says to go.

That's how they got where they are, right? He's not just it's not just complete like let go and let God theology. We're saying you don't have to make the circumstances work out for you, do what you're going says. And let it stand at that and then watch what your God does.

He told us to come here. We're here. His turn His move that he's gonna give him a couple more moves in the next passage. Yeah. Walk through the sea.

Duty is ours of Enter gods. It's the old Scott's way of saying it.

I can't remember the Dutch. I think Geshecht is in one of them but can't remember probably honee something man. Proposes and no God just but that's something good. Duty is ours. Events are gods or to put it in the more biblical language.

You know, that's the other one, that's the Dutch thing that I was just getting rid of. All right, to the good thing about recordings as we can delete all this stuff. Yes and cast a lot and it comes out the way we want to, okay? The men men cast a lot into the lap empathy.

The outcome is from the Lord. Is that anyway? Duty is ours, events are God's. He's given you instruction about what to do, but you don't have to make your circumstances. Turn out the way you won't. In fact, they might not turn out the way you want. What comes out of the circumstances as God's business and its entirely safe with him?

And it's not just for your trust, it's for your worship. That you will worship Him. There was so much wiser than you are. Who is so much more powerful than you are? Who loves you so much more than you love yourself that in his wisdom. He put you in the place.

Where by his power, he would not just get you out of it and do you good through it? I mean, that's Again, Treasure of Egypt kind of stuff but he puts you in the circumstances where he would display himself to you and whatever other good you get from it.

The greatest good is to see him stand still and see the salvation of Yahweh, He always will fight for you. Use a hold your peace. So dear congregation God has you right? Where he wants you he has the enemy right where he wants you he knows you're weak, He needs making accommodation for that.

He knows you're wicked and sometimes he tries you to make that come out. So you can see it but most of all he wants you to trust him. And to worship him. Let's pray. Lord. We thank you that you didn't send your people, the short or the fast way and you didn't give them the safest place to camp.

We thank you for the display. You make of yourself to us in this passage so that even though we have come away with some things that we want to do in some ways that we want to think about our circumstances, the best thing that we have come away with is another glimpse of who you are and how you operate with us in your love, and your power, and your wisdom, and we pray O, God, that you would lift our hearts up to see you to worship you as we have these glimpses of you, most of all in Christ in whom you have made us to behold your glory and his face.

You have caused your glory to shine in our hearts for which shining we ask the ministry of your spirit in Jesus name. Amen.