

# UNIT 26

## THE VICTORY AT THE SEA

### (Exodus 14:1-31)

#### INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

#### Text and Textual Notes

**14:1** And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the Israelites that they may turn and camp<sup>2</sup> before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea; opposite<sup>3</sup> Baal Zephon you shall camp by the sea.<sup>4</sup> **14:3** And Pharaoh will think<sup>5</sup> that the Israelites are wandering around confused<sup>6</sup> in the land--the desert has closed in upon them.<sup>7</sup> **14:4** And I will harden<sup>8</sup> the heart of Pharaoh and he will chase after

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<sup>1</sup> The account recorded in this chapter is one of the best known events in all of Scripture. In the argument of the book it marks the division between the bondage in Egypt and the establishment of the people as a nation. Here is the deliverance from Egypt. The chapter divides simply in two, verses 1-14 giving the instructions, and verses 15-31 reporting the victory. See among others, George Coats, “History and Theology in the Sea Tradition,” *Studia Theologica* 29 (1975):53-62); Arles J. Ehlen, “Deliverance at the Sea: Diversity and Unity in a Biblical Theme,” *Concordia Theological Monthly* 44 (1973):168-191; Jack B. Scott, “God’s Saving Acts,” *The Presbyterian Journal* 38 (1979):12-14; Walter Wifall, “The Sea of Reeds as Sheol,” *ZAW* 92 (1980):325-332; P. J. Smith, “Yahweh and Moses in the Story of the Exodus According to Exodus 14,” *OTWSA* 24 (1981):84-92.

<sup>2</sup> The two imperfects follow the imperative and therefore express purpose. The point in the verses is that Yahweh was giving the orders for the direction of the march and the encampment by the sea.

<sup>3</sup> Or, “before”

<sup>4</sup> The places have been tentatively identified. Kaiser summarizes the suggestions that Pi-Hahiroth as an Egyptian word may mean “temple of the [Syrian god] Hrt” or “The Hir waters of the canal” or “The Dwelling of Hator” (see the literature on these names, including C. DeWit, *The Date and the Route of the Exodus* [London: Tyndale, 1959], p. 17).

<sup>5</sup> Literally, “and will say”

<sup>6</sup> The word means “perplexed, confused”; he thought that they would not know which way to turn in order to escape--and they would never dream of crossing the sea (Driver, p. 115).

<sup>7</sup> The expression has also been translated “the desert has shut [the way] for them,” and more freely “[the Israelites are] hemmed in by the desert.”

them, and I will be honored<sup>9</sup> because of Pharaoh and because of his army; and the Egyptians will know<sup>10</sup> that I am Yahweh.” And they did so.

**14:5** It was told<sup>11</sup> to the king of Egypt that the people had fled;<sup>12</sup> and the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against the people. So he said,<sup>13</sup> “What in the world have we done,<sup>14</sup> for we have released Israel from serving<sup>15</sup> us!” **14:6** Then he prepared<sup>16</sup> his chariots, and took his army<sup>17</sup> with him. **14:7** And he took six hundred of the best<sup>18</sup> chariots, and all<sup>19</sup> the chariots of Egypt, and officers<sup>20</sup> upon

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<sup>8</sup> In this place the verb *khazaq* is used; it indicates that God would make Pharaoh's will strong or firm.

<sup>9</sup> The form is *w<sup>ʔ</sup>ikkab<sup>ʔ</sup>dah*, the *niphal* cohortative; coming after the perfect tenses with *waw* consecutive expressing the future, this cohortative indicates the purpose of the hardening and chasing. Yahweh intended to gain glory for Himself by this final and great victory over the strength of Pharaoh. There is irony in this expression since the word was used frequently to describe Pharaoh's hard heart. So judgment will not only destroy the wicked--it will reveal the glory and majesty of the sovereignty of God. See also Exod. 28:22, 29:13.

<sup>10</sup> This is the perfect tense with the *waw* consecutive. But it announces the fulfillment of an long standing purpose--that they might know . . . .

<sup>11</sup> Literally, “and it was told”; also possible: “when it was told”

<sup>12</sup> The verb must be given a past perfect translation because the fleeing occurred before the telling.

<sup>13</sup> Literally, “and he said”

<sup>14</sup> The question literally has “what is this we have done?” This is the use of the demonstrative pronoun as an enclitic, an undeclined particle stressing emphasis (Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, par. 118).

<sup>15</sup> The infinitive absolute is used as a noun here, the object of the preposition.

<sup>16</sup> Literally, “bound”

<sup>17</sup> Literally, “his people”

<sup>18</sup> The passive participle of the verb “to choose” means that these were “choice” or superb chariots.

<sup>19</sup> meaning “all the other chariots”

<sup>20</sup> The word *shalishim*) means “officers” or some special kind of military officer. At one time it was taken to mean a “three man chariot,” but the pictures of Egyptian chariots only show two in a chariot. It may mean officers near the king, “men of the third rank” (Jacob, p. 394). So the chariots and the crew represented the elite. See the old view by A. E. Cowley that linked it to a Hittite word (“A Hittite Word in Hebrew,” *JTS* 21 [1920]:326), and the more recent work by

all of them.

**14:8** But Yahweh hardened the heart of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt; and he chased after the Israelites. Now the Israelites were going out with a high hand.<sup>21</sup>

**14:9** And the Egyptians chased after them, and all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, overtook them camping by the sea, beside Pa-hahiroth, opposite Baal-Zephon. **14:10** When<sup>22</sup> Pharaoh got closer,<sup>23</sup> the Israelites lifted up their eyes<sup>24</sup> and saw that<sup>25</sup> the Egyptians were marching after them. They were terrified.<sup>26</sup> Then the Israelites cried out to Yahweh.<sup>27</sup>

**14:11** And they said to Moses, “Was it because there were no graves in Egypt you took us away to die in the desert?<sup>28</sup> What in the world<sup>29</sup> have you done to us

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P. C. Craigie connecting it to Egyptian “commander” (“An Egyptian Expression in the Song of the Sea: Exodus XV.4,” VT 20 [1970]:85)

<sup>21</sup> The expression “with a high hand” means “defiantly, boldly” or “with confidence.” The phrase is usually used for arrogant sin and pride, the defiant fist, as it were. The image of the high hand can also mean the hand raised to deliver the blow (Job 38:15). So the narrative here builds tension between these two resolute forces.

<sup>22</sup> The disjunctive *waw* introduces a circumstantial clause here.

<sup>23</sup> Literally, “drew near”

<sup>24</sup> The expression “lifted up their eyes” indicates an intentional and careful looking--they looked up and fixed their sights on the distance.

<sup>25</sup> The construction uses *hinneh* with the participle, traditionally rendered “and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them.” The deictic particle calls attention to what was being seen in a dramatic way. It captures the surprise and the sudden realization of the people.

<sup>26</sup> The verb is intensified by the adverb *m<sup>e</sup>’od*, “they feared greatly” or “were terrified.” In one look their defiant boldness seems to have evaporated.

<sup>27</sup> Their cry to Yahweh was proper and necessary. But their words against Moses were a rebuke and disloyal, showing a lack of faith and understanding. Their arrogance failed them in the crisis because it was built on the arm of flesh. Moses would have to get used to this murmuring, but here he takes it in stride and gives them the proper instructions. They had cried to Yahweh, and now Yahweh would deliver.

<sup>28</sup> Jacob notes how the speech is overly dramatic and came from a people given to using such exaggerations (Num. 16:14), even using a double negative. The challenge to Moses brings a double irony. To die in the desert would be without proper burial; but in Egypt there were graves--it was a land of tombs and graves! (Pp. 396,7). Gesenius notes that two negatives in the sentence do not nullify each other, but make the sentence all the more emphatic--“Is it because there were no graves . . . ?” (GKC, par. 152y).

<sup>29</sup> The demonstrative pronoun has the enclitic use again, given a special emphasis to

by bringing<sup>30</sup> us out of Egypt? **14:12** Was not this the word that we spoke to you in Egypt, saying, ‘Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians?’<sup>31</sup> For it would have been<sup>32</sup> better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!”

**14:13** And Moses said to the people, “Do not fear.<sup>33</sup> Stand firm<sup>34</sup> and see<sup>35</sup> the salvation<sup>36</sup> of Yahweh which He will provide<sup>37</sup> for you today; for the Egyptians which you see today you will never, ever see again.<sup>38</sup> **14:14** Yahweh<sup>39</sup> will fight

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the question (Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, par. 118).

<sup>30</sup> *ʾhotsiʾanu* is the *hiphil* infinitive construct with a suffix, “to bring us out.” It is used epexegetically here, explaining the previous question.

<sup>31</sup> Cassuto explains this statement by the people as follows: “The question appears surprising at first, for we have not read previously that such words were spoken to Moses. Nor is the purport of the protest of the Israelite foremen (v 21) identical with that of the words uttered now. However, from a psychological standpoint the matter can be easily explained. In the hour of peril the children of Israel remember that remonstrance, and now it seems to them that it was of a sharper character and flowed from their foresight, and that the present situation justifies it, for death awaits them at this moment in the desert” (p. 164).

<sup>32</sup> Literally, “it is better for us to serve”

<sup>33</sup> The use of ‘*al*’ with the jussive has the force of “stop fearing.” It is a more immediate negative command than *lo*’ with the imperfect (as in the Decalogue).

<sup>34</sup> The force of this verb in the *hithpael* is “to station oneself” or “stand firm” without fleeing.

<sup>35</sup> The form is *u-rʾu*, a *qal* imperative with the sequential *waw*. It could also be rendered “stand firm and you will see” meaning the result, or “stand firm that you may see” meaning the purpose.

<sup>36</sup> Or, “victory” or “deliverance”

<sup>37</sup> Literally “do”

<sup>38</sup> The construction uses the verbal hendiadys, a *hiphil* imperfect (“you will not add”) and the *qal* infinitive construct with a suffix (“to see them”)--“you will no longer see them.” Then the clause adds “again, for ever.”

sn/ Cassuto notes that the antithetical parallelism between seeing salvation and seeing the Egyptians in this form, as well as the threefold repetition of the word “see” cannot be accidental; so too the alliteration of the last three words beginning with ‘*ayin*’ (p. 164).

<sup>39</sup> The word order places emphasis on Yahweh.

for you; and you can be still.”<sup>40</sup>

**14:15** And Yahweh said to Moses, “Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward.<sup>41</sup> **14:16** But as for you,<sup>42</sup> lift up your rod and stretch out your hand toward the sea and divide it, that<sup>43</sup> the Israelites may go in the midst of the sea on dry ground. **14:17** But I am going to harden<sup>44</sup> the hearts of the Egyptians so that<sup>45</sup> they will go after them, that I may be honored<sup>46</sup> because<sup>47</sup> of Pharaoh and because of his army and because of his chariots and because of his horsemen. **14:18** And the Egyptians will know<sup>48</sup> that I am Yahweh when I have gained my honor<sup>49</sup> because of Pharaoh, because of his chariots, and because of his horsemen.”

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<sup>40</sup> The imperfect tense needs to be interpreted in contrast to all that Yahweh will be doing. It may be given a potential imperfect nuance (as here), or it may be obligatory to follow the command to be still--“you must be still.”

<sup>41</sup> The text literally says, “speak to the Israelites that they may journey.” The intent of the line, using the imperative with the subordinate jussive or imperfect expressing purpose is that the speaking is the command to move.

<sup>42</sup> The “but you” is emphatic before the imperative “lift up.” In contrast, verse 17 will begin with “but as for me, I . . . .”

<sup>43</sup> The imperfect (or jussive) with the *waw* is sequential coming after the series of imperatives instructing Moses to divide the sea; the form then gives the purpose (or result) of the activity--“that they may go.”

<sup>44</sup> *hin<sup>e</sup>ni* before the participle carries the force of the *futur instans* participle, “Here I am hardening” meaning “I am about to harden” or “I am going to harden” their heart.

<sup>45</sup> The form again is the imperfect tense with the *waw* to express the purpose or the result of the hardening. The repetition of the verb is interesting: Moses is to divide the sea in order that the people may cross, but God will harden the Egyptians’ hearts in order that they may follow.

<sup>46</sup> For the comments on this verb see the discussion in v. 4. God would get glory for Himself by defeating Egypt.

<sup>47</sup> Or, “I will get glory over”

<sup>48</sup> The construction is unusual in that here only do we have “and Egypt will know.” The verb is plural, and so “Egypt” must mean “the Egyptians.” The verb is the perfect tense with the *waw* consecutive, showing that this recognition or acknowledgment by Egypt will be the result or purpose of the defeat of them by God.

<sup>49</sup> The form is *b<sup>e</sup>hikkab<sup>e</sup>di*, the *niphal* infinitive construct with a preposition and a suffix. For the suffix on a *niphal*, see GKC, par 61c. The word forms a temporal clause in the line.

**14:19** And the Angel of God, who was going before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar<sup>50</sup> of the cloud moved from before them and stood behind them. **14:20** And it went between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; it was a dark cloud<sup>51</sup> to them,<sup>52</sup> but it lit up the night for these,<sup>53</sup> and one camp did not come near the other<sup>54</sup> camp the whole night.<sup>55</sup> **14:21** And Moses stretched out his hand toward the sea, and Yahweh caused the sea to go apart<sup>56</sup> by a strong east wind all that night, and He made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. **14:22** So the Israelites went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall<sup>57</sup> for them on their right and on their left

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<sup>50</sup> Jacob makes a good case that there may have been only one pillar, one cloud; it would have been a dark cloud behind it, but in front of it, shining the way, a pillar of fire. He compares the manifestation on Sinai, that the mountain was on fire, but veiled by a dark cloud (Deut. 4:11 and 5:19). See Jacob, pp. 400 and 401.

<sup>51</sup> The two nouns form a nominal hendiadys: “and it was the cloud and the darkness” would mean “and it was the dark cloud.”

<sup>52</sup> “to them” is added

<sup>53</sup> “for these” is added, referring to Israel

<sup>54</sup> “The one . . . the other” translates “this to this”; for the use of the pronouns in this sense, see GKC, par. 139, N.

<sup>55</sup> The LXX reads very differently at the end of this verse: “and there was darkness and blackness and the night passed.” Childs summarizes the three possible proposals for the difficulty in the verse: 1) One takes the MT as it stands and explains it along the lines of the Targum and Jewish exegesis, that there was one cloud that was dark to one group and light to the other; 2) Another tries to reconstruct a verb form from the noun “darkness” or make some use of the Greek verb; and 3) A third seeks a different meaning for the verb “lit, gave light” (*y’r*) by comparative philology, but no consensus has been reached (p. 218). Given that there is no easy solution apart from reconstructing the text, and given that the MT can be interpreted as it is, there is not much reason to abandon it.

<sup>56</sup> The verb is simply the *hiphil* of *halak*), “to walk, go.” The context requires that it be interpreted along the lines of “go back, go apart.”

<sup>57</sup> The clause literally reads, “and the waters [were] for them a wall.” This is a disjunctive clause with the *waw* on the noun introducing a circumstantial clause.

Driver, still trying to explain things with natural explanations, suggests that a NE wind is to be thought of (an E wind would be directly in their face he says), such as a shallow ford might cooperate with an ebb tide in keeping a passage clear (p. 119). He then quotes Dillmann about the “wall” of water: “A very summary poetical and hyperbolic (xv. 8) description of the occurrence, which at most can be pictured as the drying up of a shallow ford, on both sides of which the basin of the sea was much deeper, and remained filled with water.” There is no way

**14:23** And the Egyptians chased after them,<sup>58</sup> and went in to the midst of the sea after them, all the horses of Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen. **14:24** And in the morning watch<sup>59</sup> Yahweh looked down<sup>60</sup> on the host<sup>61</sup> of Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and He threw the Egyptians into a panic.<sup>62</sup> **14:25** He jammed<sup>63</sup> the wheels of their chariots so they had difficulty driving;<sup>64</sup> and the Egyptians said, “Let’s flee<sup>65</sup> from the presence of Israel, for Yahweh fights<sup>66</sup> for

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to “water down” the text to fit natural explanations; the report clearly shows a miraculous work of God making a path through the sea--a path that had to be as wide as a half a mile in order for the many people and their animals to cross between about 2:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. (Kaiser, p. 389). The text does not say that they actually only started across in the morning watch, however.

<sup>58</sup> “after them” added

<sup>59</sup> The night was divided into three watches of about four hours each, making the morning watch about 2:00--6:00 a.m. The text has this as “the watch of the morning,” the genitive qualifying which of the night watches was meant.

<sup>60</sup> This particular verb, *shaqaph* is a bold anthropomorphism: Yahweh looked down. But its usage is always with some demonstration of mercy or wrath. Driver suggests that the look might be with fiery flashes to startle the Egyptians, throwing them into a panic. Psalm 77:17-19 pictures torrents of rain with lightning and thunder (p. 120).

<sup>61</sup> Literally, “camp”

<sup>62</sup> The verb *hamam* means “throw into confusion.” It is used in the Bible for the panic and disarray of an army before a superior force (Josh 10:10; Judg 4:15).

<sup>63</sup> The word in the text is *wayyasar*, which would be translated “and He turned aside” with the sense perhaps of removing the wheels. The reading in the LXX, SP, and Syriac suggests a root *’asar*, “to bind.” The sense here might be “clogged--presumably by their sinking in the wet sand” (Driver, p. 120).

<sup>64</sup> The clause is *waynahagehu bikbedut*. The verb means “to drive a chariot”; here in the *piel* it means “cause to drive.” The suffix is collective, and so the verbal form can be translated “and caused them to drive.” The idea of the next word is, of course, “heavy”; it reflects the previous uses of the word for Pharaoh’s heart. Here it indicates that the driving of the crippled chariots was with difficulty--a sign that the wheels had not actually come off.

<sup>65</sup> The cohortative has the hortatory use here, “Let’s flee.” Although the form is singular, the sense of it is plural and so hortatory can be used. The form is singular to agree with the singular subject, “Egypt,” which obviously means the Egyptian armies.

them against Egypt.”**14:26** And Yahweh said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward the sea, that the waters may flow<sup>67</sup> back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. **14:27** So Moses stretched out his hand toward the sea, and the sea returned to its normal state<sup>68</sup> when morning appeared.<sup>69</sup> Now the Egyptians were fleeing<sup>70</sup> before it, but Yahweh overthrew<sup>71</sup> the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. **14:28** The waters returned<sup>72</sup> and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the army of Pharaoh that was coming into the sea after them--not so much as one of them survived.<sup>73</sup> **14:29** But the Israelites walked on dry ground in the midst of the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left hand. **14:30** So Yahweh saved<sup>74</sup> Israel in that day from the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead<sup>75</sup> upon the shore of the sea. **14:31** When Israel saw<sup>76</sup> the great power<sup>77</sup> that Yahweh exercised<sup>78</sup> over

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<sup>66</sup> The form is the *niphal* participle; it is used as the predicate here, that is, the verbal use: “Yahweh is fighting.” This corresponds to the announcement of Moses in verse 14.

<sup>67</sup> The verb, “and they will return,” is here subordinated to the imperative preceding it, showing the purpose of that act.

<sup>68</sup> *l’etano* means “to its place,” or better, “to its perennial state.” Driver summarizes the research done in the Arabic cognate which was used of a stream or a river to be perennial or ever flowing. The point is that the sea here had a normal level, and now when the Egyptians were in the sea on the dry ground the water would return to that level.

<sup>69</sup> Literally, “at the turning of the morning”

<sup>70</sup> The clause begins with the disjunctive *waw* on the noun, signaling either a circumstantial clause, or a new beginning. It could be rendered, “Although the Egyptians . . . Yahweh . . .” or “as the Egyptians . . . .”

<sup>71</sup> The verb means “shake out” or “shaking off.” It has the significance of “throw downward.” See Neh. 5:13, or Job 38:13.

<sup>72</sup> Literally, “and the waters returned”

<sup>73</sup> Literally, “not was left among them as much as one”

<sup>74</sup> The word *wayyosha’* is the key summation of the chapter, and this part of the book: “So Yahweh saved Israel.” This is the culmination of all the powerful works of God through these chapters.

<sup>75</sup> The participle “dead” is singular, agreeing in form with “Egypt.”

<sup>76</sup> The preterite with the *waw* consecutive introduces a clause that is subordinate to the main points that the verse it making.

<sup>77</sup> Literally, “the great hand,” “hand” being metonymical for work or power.

the Egyptians, they<sup>79</sup> feared Yahweh, and they believed in<sup>80</sup> Yahweh, and in Moses His servant.<sup>81</sup>

## EXPOSITORY DEVELOPMENT

The crossing of the Sea may be one of the most familiar stories of the book of Exodus, if not of the Old Testament as a whole. Our task is to tell the story theologically.

### *I. God announces his plan for defeating the oppressors (1-4).*

God reveals His plan for final victory over the wicked. The first part records

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<sup>78</sup> Literally, “did, made”

<sup>79</sup> Literally, “and the people feared”

<sup>80</sup> The verb is the *hiphil* preterite of *'aman*. Driver says that the belief intended here is not simply a crediting of a testimony concerning a person or a thing, but a laying firm hold morally on a person or a thing (p. 122). Others would take the *hiphil* sense to be declarative, and that would indicate a considering of the object of faith trustworthy or dependable, and so therefore to be acted upon. In this passage it does not mean that here they came to faith, but that they became convinced and were sure that He would save them in the future.

<sup>81</sup> Here the title of “servant” is given to Moses. This is the highest title a mortal can have in the Old Testament--the servant of Yahweh. It signifies more than a believer; it describes the individual as acting on behalf of God. For example, when Moses stretched out his hand, God used it as His own (Isa. 63:12). Moses was God’s personal representative.

The chapter records both a message of salvation and of judgment. Like the earlier deliverance from their dwelling by the passover, this chapter can be used as a lesson on deliverance from present troubles--if God could do this for Israel, there is no trouble too great for Him to overcome. The passage can also be used as a picture (at least) of the deliverance at the final judgment on the world. But the Israelites used this account for a paradigm on the power of God: namely, God is able to deliver His people from danger because He is the sovereign Lord of creation. His people must learn to trust Him, even in desperate situations; they must fear Him and not the situation. God can bring any threat to an end by bringing His power to bear in judgment on the wicked.

God's instructions for the encampment of Israel by the sea, and the reasoning behind it. Crucial to the exegesis again is the hardening of Pharaoh's heart one more time. It was all to be a trap for the destruction of Pharaoh. In it the LORD would get honor for himself, and all Egypt would know that he is Yahweh. The earlier themes of the plagues reappear here: judgment not only destroys the wicked, but reveals the LORD's glory and sovereignty.

## *II. God announces his plan for delivering his people (5-14).*

This is followed by the LORD's announcement of deliverance when his people fear the wicked (14:5-14). A word of promise was necessary in view of the dangerous situation for the people. As God predicted, he hardened Pharaoh's heart (v. 8) so that he pursued after them. At the same time, Israel went out with a high hand, i.e., confident and defiantly (usually used of pride in sinning, the raised fist). So the narrative builds tension between these two resolute forces.

When the Egyptians overtook them by the sea, the Israelites were terrified, and cried to the LORD. Their defiant pride seemed to evaporate--perhaps again by God's plan to bring them to depend on Him. But their cry against Moses is rebuke and disloyalty. They would rather have served the Egyptians than die in the wilderness (Egypt is a land of graves). Arrogance fails in the crisis, because it is confidence in the arm of flesh.

Moses has yet to learn their familiar murmuring. Here he takes it as a normal complaint, and gives them the needed instruction: "Fear not. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD. . . . The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace (or: you have only to be still)." They were to hold their position, not run, and watch the LORD destroy their enemies. The people need this reassurance of the coming victory when they fear the present opposition. They had cried out, and God would now deliver, now they were to be silent.

## *III. Victory over the world comes from the LORD (15-31).*

Finally, victory comes from the LORD (14:15-31). The great deliverance of God's people is finally the result of great judgment on the wicked. God reveals his plan to Moses (15-20) and then brings it about (21-30), causing the Israelites to fear the LORD and believe the LORD and Moses (31).

The point that is so clear in this famous account is the sovereign power of the LORD. He keeps the forces apart by the Angel of God and the pillar, He separates the water so that the people can escape, He hardens the Egyptians' hearts so they pursue, and He drowned the Egyptians in the sea. The conclusion is: Thus the LORD saved Israel in that day.

## CONCLUSION

The passage is both a deliverance story and a judgment story. Like the earlier exodus from their dwelling, this story may be taken as the lesson of present deliverances from trouble, or (and possibly in addition to, since such stories are parallel) the final deliverance and judgment. The Israelites used this as a paradigm of the power of God:

***The Lord is able to deliver his people from danger  
because he is the sovereign LORD God of creation.***

His people must learn to trust him, even in the most desperate situations; they must fear Him, and not the situation. God can end any threat or danger by bringing His power to bear in judgment on the wicked. But it calls for faith.

And ultimately this will happen at the end of the ages in a great display of His power. But only those who believe in him, who look for his glorious coming, will be delivered from the world.

But the passage has other levels of application too. It is a picture of the completion of redemption, begun with the blood. Now the redeemed will be formed into the people of God. The apostle reminds us that they who crossed the sea were baptized unto Moses, identified with him in this new phase of the covenant program.