



## EXODUS SERIES:

### #9: FORWARD TO FREEDOM

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#### BIBLICAL TEXT

*"The Israelites went into their deliverance as a discouraged, beaten down, and oppressed people. They finished the journey as a free people."*

–Pastor Adrienne

*"When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, "If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt." So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea. The Israelites went up out of Egypt ready for battle." (Exodus 13:17-18)*

*"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. 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 traveling 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 side; 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 toward 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." (Exodus 14:10-29)*

## MESSAGE SUMMARY

Life is full of before and after moments. Before you go to school. After when you're now a student. Before you marry and have a family. After you begin that life stage. Before a disease strikes. After when there's diagnoses and treatment. The Israelites had a radical before-after experience during the Exodus, recorded in chapters 13 and 14. Even as they leave Egypt, God is aware that they could be easily discouraged. That's why he hems them in, bringing them to a crisis where they have to leave the past, move forward, and embrace the freedom that God offers them. This is not an easy transition for them. They begin to panic as the Egyptian army bears down on them. They sit trapped between their enemy, the craggy terrain, and the sea. But God sees them not as slaves, but as a free people, and army even (14:19)! There's no way to go but forward, and the sea has to part. But God fights for them (14:25) and provides a miraculous way forward. Israel's response in chapter 15? Awe and worship when Moses and Miriam lead the people in a song of praise to God, their deliverer.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

*These questions are designed to help you lead your group through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage and the speaker's message, helping them understand and apply the teaching.*

### LEAN IN

*These are icebreaker/warm up questions, mostly just to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.*

1. What's a good example of a "before-and-after" moment?
2. Where did you feel like you took a small step forward this week?
3. What were some of your low points, if any?

### LOOK DOWN

*These are questions on the passage and observations about what's been read.*

*Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max*

1. Why do you think God was concerned about the Israelites changing their minds?
2. Why do you think Moses told the people to "stand firm"?
3. How does it strike you that God's response is to tell Moses and the people to "move on"?
4. How do the Egyptians respond to God's intervention? Why is that important?
5. How do you related to God's miraculous intervention?

### LOOK OUT

*These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today.*

*Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max*

1. Where do you see the need for people to "move forward" into God-given freedom?
2. If you could ask God to do something in the world that brings freedom, what would it be?
3. What's the Church's role—your role—in helping that along, if any?
4. Where do you see God active and at work to accomplish this?
5. Can you recall a "miracle" where you have been convinced that God actively intervened, even if it didn't seem so to others? What was that like?

### LOOK IN

*These are questions that help you consider personal application.*

*Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max*

1. What's your biggest before-and-after need. Where do you want to move forward into freedom?
2. What discourages you? The time table? The process? Something else?"
3. What limitations do you place in God? Are you "standing firm" when God is saying, "Move forward!"?

**DISCUSSION  
QUESTIONS,  
CONT.**

4. How can you pray for this kind of freedom for yourself, or another?
5. What do you want God to do for you. How do you want him to fight for you, or them?

**LIVE IT OUT**

*These action steps help apply this week's message to day to day life.*

*Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.*

1. What does it look like for you to take a step of faith and "move forward"?
2. Talk about how you'd like to put prayer to work to help you embrace God's freedom?"
3. How can you do all of this in community with another, or others?