



# CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS

MAY 04 2019

**Scripture Story:** Exodus 12:34-51; 13-15.

**Commentary:** *Patriarchs and Prophets* (or *Beginning of the End*), chapter 25.

## faith first?



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### flashlight

“Moses was greatly troubled that his people should manifest so little faith in God, notwithstanding they had repeatedly witnessed the manifestation of His power in their behalf. How could they charge upon him the dangers and difficulties of their situation, when he had followed the express command of God? True, there was no possibility of deliverance unless God Himself should interpose for their release; but having been brought into this position in obedience to the divine direction, Moses felt no fear of the consequences” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 284).

### keytext

“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.’ ”

(Exodus 14:13, 14, NIV)

# what do you think?

In your opinion, which of the following scenarios would test your faith the most? Which one would test your faith the least? Explain why.

1. The financial officer of your Christian school has informed you that you need to pay your bill in order to stay in school. You believe that God wants you to receive a Christian education, but you have no idea how to get the money to pay for it.
2. You struggle with a destructive addiction. Your friend says that if you "have more faith" God will deliver you from the habit.
3. You are convicted about the importance of having an hour of quiet time with God each day, but you are also behind in your schoolwork.
4. You are the victim of a malicious rumor at school. When you get a chance to get even, you wrestle with the tension of taking the matter into your own hands or trusting God to bring justice to the situation.
5. Your boyfriend/girlfriend is pressuring you to violate God's law. If you stay true to God, you might lose your friend.

## did you know?

**A**fter God buried the Egyptians in the Red Sea, the Israelites sang the song of deliverance (Exodus 15:1-18). Many scholars attribute this magnificent piece of poetry to Moses. For many generations to come, God's people would sing this song. It is also associated with the final triumph of the church in the book of Revelation (e.g., compare Exodus 15:3 with Revelation 19:11). Some suggest that this is the oldest recorded song in the world.

## INTO THE STORY

"When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his officials changed their minds about them and said, 'What have we done? We have let the Israelites go and have lost their services!' So he had his chariot made ready and took his army with him."

"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 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."

"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."

"But the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left. That day the LORD saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. And when the Israelites saw the mighty hand of the LORD displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant."

(Exodus 14:5, 6, 10-14, 21-23, 26, 27, 29-31, NIV)

# OUT OF THE STORY

If you were preparing to teach this story to first graders, what key spiritual lessons would you emphasize?

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Find a map of the ancient world and trace the path of the Israelites out of Egypt into the desert.

What one word would you choose to describe the attitude of the following characters in the story?

Pharaoh: \_\_\_\_\_

Moses: \_\_\_\_\_

The Israelites: \_\_\_\_\_

God: \_\_\_\_\_

Circle any words or phrases in the text that capture the emotions in the story.

From God's perspective, what is the primary lesson that you believe He was trying to teach His people through this experience?

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"Israel had to learn from repeated experience that God was able to provide for them. God has preserved these examples in the Bible so that we can learn to trust him the first time. By focusing on God's faithfulness in the past we can face crises with confidence rather than with fear and complaining."—*Life Application Bible*, notes on Ex. 14:10, 11.

## punch lines

**"But you are** a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy" (1 Peter 2:9, 10, NIV).

**"Consider it pure** joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything" (James 1:2-4, NIV).

**"You are my** hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance" (Psalm 32:7, NIV).

**"Be faithful,** even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor's crown" (Revelation 2:10, NIV).

**"Ascribe to the LORD,** all you families of nations, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come before him. Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness" (1 Chronicles 16:28, 29, NIV).

## further insight

**"We do not earn salvation by our obedience; for salvation is the free gift of God, to be received by faith. But obedience is the fruit of faith. . . . Christ changes the heart. He abides in your heart by faith. . . . Then with Christ working in you, you will manifest the same spirit and do the same good works—works of righteousness, obedience."**

—Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 61-63.

# connectingtolife

## Sabbath

Read Exodus 14:13.

Identify a "Red Sea" in your life. In what way is your faith being challenged by this obstacle? How is God asking you to step out in faith? Who might act as Moses for you and bring you the assurance of God's leading? Think about your "Red Sea," then memorize today's text: "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today" (Exodus 14:13, NIV).

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## Sunday

Read Exodus 14:5.

Read the section *Into the Story* and answer the questions that follow in *Out of the Story*. With whom do you identify most in the story? Why?

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## Monday

Read the *Punch Lines*, then search your Bible (with the help of a concordance or commentary) and write down two more texts that illuminate each of the following topics that emerge from this story of the Israelites leaving Egypt:

Faith: \_\_\_\_\_

Worship: \_\_\_\_\_

Salvation: \_\_\_\_\_

Our identity as a church: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Tuesday

Read Psalm 32:7.

Put yourself in the place of one of the Israelites walking through the Red Sea on dry land. Imagine the experience through a

variety of senses. What did it smell like? What did it feel like? What did it look like? What did it sound like? If possible, share your first-person narrative as a children's story in Sabbath School or church.

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## Wednesday

Read the song of deliverance in Exodus 15. Think of an experience in which God has delivered you. Write your own song of deliverance, then read it to God as an act of worship.

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## Thursday

Read 1 Peter 2:9, 10.

Shortly after the incredible miracle at the Red Sea, the Israelites forgot about God's intervention for them, and they started grumbling against Moses and Aaron.

In a small group of friends, discuss the following questions: Have you struggled with a spirit of complaint? Share a story about a time when you experienced God's power. Did you find that in time the excitement of that miracle started to wear off? Why is it so easy to forget about God's miraculous care and slide back into old familiar habits of sin? Can you think of other examples in the Bible in which people forgot about God's leading in the past? How can we keep from faltering in our faith?

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Discuss this statement by Ellen White: "We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history" (*Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* [1915], p. 196). In

the Hawaiian culture there is a similar saying: "*E moakaka ke ala o keia mua aku I ka wa I hala.*" For fun, commit it to memory. And remember what it means: "The path to the future is made clear through our knowledge and understanding of the past."

## Friday

Read Revelation 2:10.

Keep a journal for the next six months. Carefully document times when you sense God's leading. In the future, when you find your faith is getting weak, read that journal and remind yourself of how God has been faithful in the past. This practice will bolster your confidence to march ahead in God's power—even when it feels as if you're walking into an ocean.

If you take that first step, keeping in mind how God has been trustworthy in the past, you will learn to radically trust God. Moreover, you will see God work miracles you never dreamed possible. But—you've got to take that first step. So think of an area in which God is inviting you to take a leap of faith—then jump!

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## this week's reading\*

*Patriarchs and Prophets, (or Beginning of the End)*, chapter 25.

\**Beginning of the End* is a special adaptation of *Patriarchs and Prophets*, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press. Get more information about it at [www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s](http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s). By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages series each year.