

STRAIGHT OUTTA EGYPT – Week 4
The Red Sea

INTRO (5)

What's up LSM!!? Are you guys stoked to be here tonight?? For those of you who are here for the first time, or who haven't been here in awhile, my name is Mike, and I'm the new middle school pastor with LSM. Middle school pastors are known for being weird and crazy like their students... we're the ones who just do things sometimes that when everyone else sees it they're like, wow that dude...is different. Like for instance I once rapped the Fresh Prince of Bel Aire song in a Scottish accent, but I'm not doing that for you guys tonight. Where's my middle schoolers at?! That's right those are my people, we're gonna have a lot of fun this next year, maybe blow some stuff up or something and blame it on high school, works every time. But anyways guys I'm really excited about tonight, because I believe that God has given me a message to preach to everyone here, and I expect that God is going to change some lives tonight. Let me hear you guys say "LIFE CHANGE" (they repeat) alright guys let me pray for us and we will get into it.

(Prayer)

Recap

Well today, as we continue our series "STRAIGHT OUTTA EGYPT" I want to continue talking about the story of Moses and how he finds himself and the people of Israel in a very scary situation. So just to recap, in the last couple chapters, God sends Moses, the leader of His people (called the Israelites) to Pharaoh (the leader of the Egyptians) time after time after time again to ask him to let God's people go so that they can worship the true God. You see Israel had been in slavery to the Egyptians for 430 years, and God, in His mercy, decided to free them by unleashing 10 separate plagues on Egypt to punish them for not worshipping the LORD and for mistreating His people. These plagues ranged from turning their rivers to blood, to having all of their crops killed by locusts, to covering the land in complete darkness for 3 days. All of these plagues were incredible, and by the time they were over Egypt was totally ruined.

But the most important plague was the last one to happen. God decided to kill every firstborn child of every family in Egypt, and the only way anyone in Israel could escape was if they killed a lamb that had no defect or problems, and wiped the sides and top of the door of their house with some of its blood. When the angel of the Lord passed over the house, it would see the blood and spare the first-born child. When this happened, Egypt was devastated, but Israel was safe because of their obedience. Pharaoh finally had enough and let Israel go. God then gave the Israelites instructions on having a special feast called the Passover, which celebrated how God used the last plague to spare and rescue His people.

Now we are in chapter 14, and the Israelites have just left Egypt. Let's read.

BIBLE (5)

vv. 1-4: ¹Then the LORD said to Moses, ²“Tell the people of Israel to turn back and encamp in front of Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, in front of Baal-zephon; you shall encamp facing it, by the sea. ³For Pharaoh will say of the people of Israel, ‘They are wandering in the land; the wilderness has shut them in.’⁴And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, and the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD.” Pause, God intentionally places His people in a position where they will be trapped. In front of them is the desert, and behind them is the ocean. There over 1 million Israelites, and no boats. They are sitting ducks. He intentionally led them into a situation to where their faith was tested in Him. God also plans to make Pharaoh go out to attack Israel while they are trapped, to show the Egyptians by what He is going to do that He is greater than they are.

vv. 5-9. ⁵When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the mind of Pharaoh and his servants was changed toward the people, and they said, “What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?” ⁶So he made ready his chariot and took his army with him, ⁷and took six hundred chosen chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them. ⁸And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the people of Israel while the people of Israel were going out defiantly. ⁹The Egyptians pursued them, all Pharaoh's horses and chariots and his horsemen and his army, and overtook them encamped at the sea, by Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon. Pause, just like God has planned, He makes Pharaoh decide to attack Israel while they seem weak. Egypt brought their best military force, which at that time was the best army in the world. From a normal person's point of view, Israel is about to be slaughtered, I mean slaughtered. **More slaughtered than a newb who is playing his first game of Call of Duty, and everyone else in the game has already prestiged several times. Any COD players in here? COD is terrible. Do something else with your lives. Just kidding I love you all.** So we see that the Egyptian army has caught up to them now.

vv. 10-14. ¹⁰When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they feared greatly. And the people of Israel cried out to the LORD. ¹¹They said to Moses, “Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt? ¹²Is not this what we said to you in Egypt: ‘Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.” ¹³And Moses said to the people, “Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. ¹⁴The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.” Pause, two things stand out to me here. 1) Even though Israel has seen God unleash incredible plagues and miracles, and they have already seen how He is with them and won't leave them, none of that seems to matter to them now because the Egyptians are here. When confronted with what they see in front of them, they know longer trust in Who is watching over them. 2) Moses has become bold and brave. Earlier in this story he was scared and doubting God, but because he got to see God's power and more of Who He was, he now trusts in Him even though it looks like the Egyptians are going to win. He is the opposite of his people.

vv. 15-18. ¹⁵The LORD said to Moses, “Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. ¹⁶Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground. ¹⁷And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. ¹⁸And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.” As you guys can see, God is still in control of this entire situation, He is now working another miracle through Moses by splitting the sea in two so the Israelites can run through it on dry land. He is also still controlling what the Egyptians do by hardening and controlling Pharaoh’s heart.

vv. 19-25. ¹⁹Then the angel of God who was going before the host of Israel moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, ²⁰coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness. And it lit up the night[Ⓜ] without one coming near the other all night.

²¹Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. ²²And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. ²³The Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. ²⁴And in the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw the Egyptian forces into a panic, ²⁵clogging[Ⓜ] their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily. And the Egyptians said, “Let us flee from before Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians.”

One thing we haven’t covered is that when Israel escaped, God led them where to go by appearing in a cloud and leading them like that during the day, and by appearing in a pillar of fire by night so they could travel during either the day or the night. So God moves the pillar of cloud and fire in between His people and the Egyptians to protect them until it’s time to go through the sea. Now the Israelites are escaping through the sea on dry ground, and as the Egyptians start chasing them God throws them into a panic, and clogs the wheels of their chariots so that they are pretty much useless. Ironic, the most powerful weapon in the world at that time which the Egyptians trusted in didn’t mean anything when God decided to act. We should wonder if there’s anything in this world that we are trusting in more than God, and how it’s working out for us.

vv. 26-29. ²⁶Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.” ²⁷So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal course when the morning appeared. And as the Egyptians fled into it,

the LORD threwⁱⁿ the Egyptians into the midst of the sea. ²⁸ The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen; of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained. ²⁹ But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. God releases the waters of the Red sea, and the Egyptians drown and die while the Israelites escape. God saved them again, even when it seemed impossible.

vv. 30-31. ³⁰ Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹ Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses. This is the most important passage in this chapter, and it's really what I want to talk about tonight. The whole purpose of this entire story centers around verse 31 (have it on screen). "Israel saw the great power that the Lord used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the Lord, and they believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses." The reason why all of this happened, Israel being trapped, God splitting the Red Sea, God defeating the Egyptians...was so that Israel would FEAR THE LORD, and BELIEVE IN THE LORD and trust in Moses' leadership.

TRANSITION (5 min)

Now when I say the phrase "Fear the Lord" I'm sure that many of us have this mental picture of us walking around being scared of God all the time, like the second we slip He is just going to strike us with a lightning bolt or something. That is not what this means, and that is not what God is like. Does anyone in here have any stories of a time when you were incredibly scared? I mean like scared for your life kind of scared? I do.

Tell your story of hanging out with Ben Fairbanks.

Now in that story I just shared with you guys, I'm sure we can all agree that that is the kind of fear that makes you want to hide. But this isn't what the Bible means when it says that God wanted Israel to fear the Lord.

BOTTOM LINE (5)

And this brings me to the greatest thing I want you all to understand tonight. If there is anything you take away from tonight I want it to be this phrase, this is the first blank in your notes, write this down. Remember this, and don't judge my handwriting, or I'll find you and...nevermind I have no idea what I'll do. Just read my handwriting.

(whiteboard)

FEARING THE LORD RELEASES US FROM FEAR.

(circle each phrase and draw a whiteboard description)

repeat bottom line

Fearing The LORD- (draw line and write adjectives) the phrase "Fear the Lord" in the Bible literally means that you are in **awe** of WHO GOD IS and WHAT HE HAS DONE FOR US. **Psalm 33:8** says "Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!" You approach God with **REVERENCE**. You are **amazed** at who He is. This kind of fear causes us to see God as Someone Who is **worthy** of our love, worship, and obedience. When we fear the Lord, God is truly great to us. Let me ask you guys a question, what do you see in life that causes you to be in awe or amazed? For me it's when I'm in nature, especially in the mountains and I see how big things are out there, and how small I am compared to it all. And it reminds me that God is great. So fearing the Lord here is actually a very good thing.

Now this (**circle fear, draw arrow**) is the opposite of fearing the Lord. This version of fear is the result of **doubt** in God. This is the doubt the Israelites showed before the parting of the Red Sea. We are not amazed at who God is, because of this we don't trust Him. Life becomes about us, and what is around us, rather than Who is above us. When tough circumstances appear, like when the Egyptians had the Israelites cornered at the Red Sea, we forget everything that God has done for us, because we don't trust that God is great. We don't believe the truth that God is greater than all things, and so when tough times come we become scared!

"Israel saw the great power that the Lord used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the Lord, and they believed in the Lord" Because Israel saw all that God had done for them by parting the Red Sea and destroying the Egyptians, they now believed that God was great, and they were in awe of Him. And because they were in awe of Him, they were able to believe in Him. You see guys, this is what it's all about. If you aren't amazed at Who God is, that He is perfect, all-powerful, all-knowing, sees everything, and is worthy of all our love and obedience, then you don't know who God is. And if you don't know who God is, you can't believe in Him.

That's why the next thing I want you to write in your notes is: You can't believe in the Lord if you don't fear the Lord. And guys, we need to believe in the Lord. Here's why

GOSPEL (7)

You see, I love the story of the parting of the Red Sea because it shows the gospel so well. The Israelites were facing certain death before the Egyptians, and the only way they were going to be saved was finding a way to the other side of the sea. There was literally no way to escape to the other side, unless God made a way. Unless God did something, they were going to die there. But God made a path through the ocean for salvation. In that moment, the Israelites had to make a decision to believe that God was trustworthy, and that He was worthy to be followed if they were going to walk in the middle of this ocean or not.

In much the same way, everyone on this earth is facing a disaster. **Romans 3:23** says "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" Everyone has disobeyed God, all of us, and

because of that **Romans 6:23 says “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”** Because all of us have disobeyed God, the Bible tells us that we all deserve death, in this case meaning separation from God forever in hell. We can’t have a relationship with God. We all stand guilty before God, but God loves us so much He made a way of salvation for us just like He did the Israelites, only greater. He sent His own Son Jesus Christ to be the pathway that leads us to life forever with God. Jesus is God, who came to the earth as a person, who lived a perfect life, and was killed in our place. Jesus took all of the punishment that we deserved-separation from God forever, and died for us. To prove that He is God and that He is more powerful than sin, Jesus rose again from the grave 3 days later to secure His victory. This is what Easter is all about! However not everyone gets to be forgiven and be with God forever just because Jesus died and rose again. You must believe that Jesus is God, that He died and rose again for your sins, and give your life to Him as your Lord. In order for this to happen you need to recognize that God is very great, and apart from Jesus we aren’t good enough to save ourselves. This is why fearing the Lord is so important. When you recognize God’s power, it allows you to see that you aren’t good enough, and that you need Jesus. Jesus is the only way to be forgiven and coming into a relationship with God, just as the path God made through the Red Sea was the only way the Israelites could escape. **John 14:6 says “Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”**

And now I want to invite you guys into something. God is very great, and awesome, and He is also very loving. We might fall short of God, but He sent His own Son to die for us so He could save us, and we don’t even deserve it! Receiving Jesus into your life and following Him is a free gift; there is nothing you can do to earn it! As in the time of Israel, there is a path of salvation open and ready for us to take so we can be in a relationship with God. But you must make a decision.

RESPONSE

For many of you, you haven’t feared the Lord in your life yet. You’ve never truly seen God as being amazing, holy, and worthy to be worshipped and followed. So you haven’t believed in His Son Jesus and given your life to Him. To be honest, you’re still trapped in sin, you don’t have Jesus, so you don’t have a relationship with God. If you’re in that group tonight, and you haven’t truly accepted Jesus as your Lord before but you want a relationship with God, I want to give you that opportunity right now. ROMANS 10:9-10. Everyone please bow their heads and close their eyes. If you are in this room tonight, and you have NEVER accepted Jesus into your life and committed yourself to following Him, but you want to, pray this prayer with me. Just saying these words to God and repeating them doesn’t save you, it’s meaning them to God. 1) Holy 2) believe Jesus is God’s Son and God Himself, 3) I’m a sinner, please forgive me, 4) commit to following you for the rest of my life.

Response – hands in the air. Eyes open. If you just raised your hand, I want you to come in the back of the room and talk with one of our leaders (see hands) so they can talk to you about the decision you just made and so we can know. I encourage you to bring a friend with you.

PERSONAL

Now for those of us in here who are Christians, and have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It is very easy to get into a relationship with God, but forget to fear Him. We end up “fearing” (point to whiteboard) so many things in this life because we have forgotten just who God is. Because of this, we often keep falling into these cycles of sin and disobeying God. We end up letting life get the better of us. But when we come back to God, and ask Him to help us fear Him, and spend time with Him we will see that God is infinitely bigger than anything happening in our lives. We will end up trusting God and giving our problems to Him, rather than trying to fight them on our own. So there are 3 things that will help you guys tonight, and they are. These are the next 3 notes I want you to take.

- 1) **Get In A Discipleship Group/Connect Group.** (Have leaders raise hands in the back, give leader shout-out)
- 2) **Take Bold Steps Privately.** (grow in holiness – remember that we are not perfect and will fail at times) – Proverbs 16:6
 - Spend time with God every day – start small. The more you are with God, the more you will fear God, the more you revere God, the more
 - Commit to fighting personal sin
- 3) **Take Bold Steps Publicly.** Hebrews 13:5-6 – we are often so scared to share God with our friends
 - Share gospel with friends
 - Invite friends to LSM

For the believer, don't doubt God when times get tough, fear Him.

When it comes to salvation, you either cross through the sea, or you die where you are. There is no other option. God is on the other side of the sea and the only way to get to Him is through Jesus. Jesus' death on the cross for our sins and His resurrection from the grave opens a path for us to escape certain spiritual death, but you must take it. In order to reach the other side where God is, you must believe Jesus Christ as the Son of God and fear Him as God, trust Him ALONE for forgiveness and salvation from your sins, and commit to following Him as your Lord.