

Let the Journey Begin

a study in the book of Exodus

God Brought You Here - Exodus 13:17-22 and Exodus 14:1,2

Lesson 5

Israel was free! "There are two freedoms—the false, where a man is free to do what he likes; and the true, where a man is free to do what he ought." Throughout their history, the nation of Israel struggled with both of these freedoms, just as God's people struggle with them today. Exodus 13 and 14 reveal two important responsibilities of our freedom: following the LORD and trusting the LORD.

Read Exodus 13:17-22 and 14:1,2

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework) and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they are about?
2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). In this lesson, we will be marking the key characters of the text. Mark each of the key characters each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns that refer to each one.
Key Characters: LORD/God; Pharaoh, Moses, Egypt, and the children of Israel
3. Make a list of some things that stood out to you about the LORD (what He did and His commands to His people).

- a. Describe the LORD as He is revealed in these verses.

Read Exodus 13:17-19

1. Without doubt, the shortest route to Canaan (the Promised Land) would have been through Philistine territory. Exodus 13:17 tells us that *God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near*. What reason are we given for God's choice route for them?
 - a. In what ways can you relate to wanting to turn back to your past life when things become difficult?

 - b. The children of Israel would learn warfare. But they were not ready. What have you discovered in your life that has "readied" you for warfare?

2. Consider the words of Numbers 14:1-4. Rewrite them as a believer might express them today.

3. What truths do you tell yourself when you are tempted to go back to your old ways?

4. Record the words of Proverbs 3:5,6 and Psalm 25:4,5.
 - a. Share how they relate to this section of Exodus.

5. Our God does not miss any details. Israel departed Egypt on the very day God promised. Joseph, in faith, knew the people would one day leave Egypt. What did he make the *children of Israel* promise? Genesis 50:25
 - a. Considering Joseph's promise to them in Genesis 50:25, think on the reaction of the people to Moses' words as recorded in Exodus 4:31.
 - 1.) This was probably a first-time experience for the children of Israel. Recall one of the first times that you remember God *visiting* (revealing Himself). What was it like for you?
 - a.) Share a thought, as you imagine the people of Israel realizing afresh God's care for them as promised by Joseph.

Read Exodus 13:20-22

1. Record the first six words of Exodus 13:21.
 - a. What are your thoughts when you meditate on the fact that God goes *before* you?
2. Consider the following verses and record your reaction to them as they relate to God ordering your steps.

Psalm 17:5

Psalm 40:2

Proverbs 16:9

Challenge: Record other verses regarding our *steps*.

3. Bask in the first words of Exodus 13:22. In light of Israel's rebellions, why is this so very wonderful?

Read Exodus 14:1,2

1. Record the words of Exodus 14:2.
2. The children of Israel followed the leading of the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. They went when and where they were led. In Exodus 13:20, they *camped* (stopped) *at the edge of the wilderness*. In Exodus 14:2, they were told to *turn*. Consider your GPS. When do you choose to follow its instructions?
 - a. When do you choose to not follow its instructions?
3. What does Isaiah 26:4 remind us about *trusting the LORD*?
4. What thinking process do you go through when you find yourself doubting God's *path* for you?

5. Israel is about to find themselves between a vast Egyptian army and the waters of the Red Sea. Consider a time you were in a similar situation, as far as hemmed in and feeling like there were no options. What was it like for you?

a. What did God do?

6. David was a man who found himself in dire predicaments many times. Yet, what did David declare in Psalm 18:2?

a. What can we learn from this?

Review Exodus 13:17-22 and 14:1,2

1. In what ways were you challenged or encouraged by this lesson?

*The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade at your right hand.
The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.
The LORD shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your soul.
The LORD shall preserve your going out and your coming in
from this time forth, and even forevermore.*

- Psalm 121:5-8

Observation Worksheet

Exodus 13:17-22 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.

Exodus 14:1-2 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.