

Let the Journey Begin

a study in the book of Exodus

For God's Glory - Exodus 14:3,4

Lesson 6

As Pharaoh saw that Israel appeared to be closed in by the Red Sea, he made several assumptions about their dilemma and his power. Often when we find ourselves hemmed in by a trial, we ask the wrong questions as our goals and perspectives are skewed. God's goal is that He *gain honor*. Ours should also be the LORD's honor and glory. May you be challenged to consider your goals and find yourself aligning with the LORD.

Read Exodus 14:3,4

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, Pharaoh, and the children of Israel*

3. What did God say:

He would do?

Pharaoh would do?

The Egyptians would know?

Read Exodus 14:3 *They are bewildered*

1. What instructions did God give to Israel in Exodus 14:2?
 - a. Record the last words of Exodus 14:4 that confirm Israel's obedience.

2. God knew that in camping before Pi Hahiroth, the children of Israel would find themselves in an overwhelming situation which would prompt them to be *bewildered*. Define the word *bewildered*.
 - a. List synonyms for the word *bewildered*.

3. What questions do you tend to ask when you are *bewildered*?

4. We have seen that God deliberately orchestrated the events. We can also see that Israel's enemy saw their circumstances and chose to take advantage of them. We can even see that God revealed to their enemy their vulnerabilities. If these three facts were all you knew, how might you react?
 - a. It is not difficult to place ourselves within the parameters of these facts when we are in a *bewildering* trial. God purposed it, the enemy is trying to take advantage of it, and God is seemingly exposing us to the enemy. According to the following verses, what can we know in times like this?

Isaiah 55:8-12

Jeremiah 29:11
 - b. What are some truths or verses you use to keep from being *bewildered* in *bewildering* times?

Read Exodus 14:3 *The wilderness has closed them in*

1. God brought Israel to a place to camp which, when Pharaoh's armies pursued, they would find themselves *closed in*. Using your own words, describe what it is like to feel *closed in*.

2. Reflect upon David's dilemma as recorded in Psalm 71:10,11.

a. Now record the thoughts that brought him to victory over his fears using verses 14-17.

b. What can we learn from David's example?

3. The prophet Jeremiah was an unpopular prophet amongst his own people. Summarize what he wrote in:

Jeremiah 20:10

Jeremiah 20:11

a. Take a moment and reflect upon the fact that our God, your God is *a mighty, awesome One*.

Read Exodus 14:4 *I will harden Pharaoh's heart*

1. There are ten passages in Exodus that state that the LORD *hardened Pharaoh's heart*. There are also ten passages in Exodus that state that Pharaoh *hardened his own heart*. As an example, what did God say, in Exodus 4:21, that He would have to do and why?

a. Notice Pharaoh's part in this by recording the words of Exodus 8:15.

2. Pharaoh's heart was *hardened* when God revealed Himself. Hard hearts result in being exposed to God and His truths. God revealed Himself and thus, Pharaoh's heart was hardened. It would not have been hardened towards God if God had not done that. Explain this using 2 Corinthians 2:15,16.

a. God's revelation of Himself can also soften a heart. Share your experience.

3. The result of God revealing Himself through the plagues, was that Pharaoh's *heart hardened*. We again see the actions that followed this *hardening* in Exodus 14:4. What was the result of Pharaoh's hardened heart this time?

a. Sadly, we all personally have *hardened* our hearts to God's purposes for us. What are some of your thoughts as you reflect upon one of those times?

1.) Pensively record the words of Job 9:4.

a.) What is your reaction to this verse?

Read Exodus 14:4 *I will gain honor*

1. God can use anyone to gain honor for Himself. What words did He tell Moses to say to Pharaoh in Exodus 9:16?

2. Consider the story of the man born blind in John 9. The disciples asked Jesus, "*Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?*". What was Jesus' response in verse 3?

3. Consider the story of Lazarus in John 11. To summarize, Jesus' friend Lazarus was sick unto death. Jesus waited two more days before he left for Lazarus' hometown of Bethany. Upon seeing Jesus, Lazarus' sister Martha said to Him, "*Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.*" Jesus could have prevented this family from great pain. Yet, He did not. What did Jesus tell His disciples was the purpose of Lazarus' sickness in verse 4?

Read Exodus 14:4 *They will know I am the LORD*

1. *Then they shall know* is a phrase often used by God in the Bible. It follows an action of deliverance or judgment. Ezekiel 36 prophesies of God's blessing and renewal of Israel. Ponder His words to them in Ezekiel 36:23,24. What did He declare to be His purpose?
2. In Exodus 14:4, we see two of God's purposes. What are they?
3. We ask many questions when we find ourselves in hard straits. How might things have changed if we had asked: Lord, how can I honor You in this and how can I reveal to others what You are like as I sit in this place of *bewilderment*?

Review 14:3,4

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

*You showed signs and wonders against Pharaoh,
against all his servants, and against all the people of his land.
For You knew that they acted proudly against them.
So You made a name for Yourself, as it is this day.
- Nehemiah 9:10*

Observation Worksheet

Exodus 14:3-4 For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, 'They are bewildered by the land; the wilderness has closed them in.' ⁴ Then I will harden Pharaoh's heart, so that he will pursue them; and I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, that the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD." And they did so.