

Trials = Faith Builders for the Future

Exodus 40:30 states: *“Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore.”* This verse comes after the dramatic and miraculous event where the Red Sea parted and then returned to its natural state, drowning Pharaoh’s army. It summarizes what Israel had just seen happen with their own eyes: their ultimate and complete deliverance by the hand of God. It had not come by their own cleverness or strength but only by God’s intervention in seemingly impossible circumstances. God demonstrated to them that He was both a way maker and promise keeper. He not only freed Israel that day but ensured they would never be enslaved by Egypt again.

The second part of the verse, *“and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore,”* reveals the tangible evidence of God’s judgement. The Israelites saw with their own eyes that the once mighty Egyptian army had been completely destroyed. This visible sight served as confirmation that God had defeated Israel’s enemies in a decisive and irreversible way. The sight of the dead Egyptians was a reminder that the Lord had not only saved them but had also executed His judgment on their oppressors. They were truly free from Egypt’s tyranny.

In this verse we also see the faithfulness of God to keep His promises. God had told Moses in Exodus 14:13-14 that He would fight for Israel and that they would not need to fear the Egyptians. This moment of deliverance marked the fulfillment of that promise. God proved Himself to be trustworthy and powerful, keeping His word to protect His people.

The same lessons Israel learned still apply to us today. Just as the Israelites were in a dire situation, surrounded by their enemies with no way of escape, many of us find ourselves in difficult and overwhelming circumstances. The verse encourages us to trust in God’s ability to deliver us. When we face seemingly insurmountable challenges, we must remember that God is in control and that He has the power to save. Just as God parted the Red Sea for the Israelites, He can intervene in our lives in ways that we cannot predict or understand. We must place our trust in God, knowing that He will fight for us and that His deliverance is both sure and complete.

The deliverance of Israel from Egypt is a picture of how God can deliver us from sin. He offers freedom from the bondage of sin through His Son, Jesus. This verse is a reminder that God has the power to deliver from all forms of spiritual oppression. The Israelites’ escape from Egypt serves as a metaphor for the believer’s escape from the slavery of sin, and that once we are freed by God, there is no turning back. Just as Israel could never return to Egypt after being freed, believers are called to live in the freedom that Christ provides and to never return to the bondage of sin.

Exodus 14:30 also challenges us to trust in God’s guidance and timing. The Israelites had to take a step of faith by crossing the Red Sea, believing that God would part the waters and

make a way where there seemed to be none. Similarly, God calls us to take steps of faith, even when the way seems uncertain. God's deliverance often requires obedience to His commands and faith in His promises. God wants us to follow His leading even when it doesn't make sense or seems impossible. Then, just as God made a way for Israel in the Red Sea, He will make a way for us today.

The last verse of the chapter concludes, *“Thus Israel saw the great work which the Lord had done in Egypt; so the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and His servant Moses.”*

So the Israelites recognized the mighty work of God in their deliverance from Egypt. His “great work” of parting of the Red Sea and then annihilating Pharaoh's army demonstrated that God was with His people and that He had the power to control nature itself in order to bring about their salvation. The Israelites were filled with fear and wonder at God's miraculous intervention, and recognized that their deliverance was not by their own strength, wisdom, or power, but entirely by the grace and might of God.

Finally, the verse says that the Israelites “believed the Lord, and his servant Moses.” Although the Israelites had witnessed various signs and miracles during the course of their deliverance from Egypt (e.g., the plagues), their belief in God and Moses had been shaky and inconsistent up until this point. However, at this moment, they finally recognized that God was not only powerful but faithful to His promises. They also accepted Moses as their leader, which had been questioned/challenged by the people during their journey. The Israelites now fully trusted in God and Moses, marking the beginning of a deeper, more committed relationship with God. This was the result God intended.

Sadly, for Israel however, they did not stay in this place of respect and faith toward the LORD. We will soon see that their attitude change was probably based more on feelings than true faith because they left this place of respect for the LORD and Moses quickly. They believed with their eyes but it never made it to their hearts.

For us, this verse is a reminder in moments of doubt or fear, remember that God has proven His power through His mighty acts. Just as He delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, He is able to deliver His people from the bondage of sin, oppression, and fear. We need to have a reverential fear of God at all times - never forgetting His holiness, majesty, and authority; never forgetting what He has done for us, Lastly, we must trust in God's leadership and put our faith in Him and His plan for us.

“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,” 1 Peter 1:6-7

God has designed the Christian life to require dependence on Him. One of the ways He does it is through trials. Peter says our faith is “tested by fire” through trials to show our faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious

than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world. Not only does our faith increase during these hard times but we also tend to draw nearer to God. In these times we experience God's grace and sufficiency in ways that we can't when things are easy. It is because He loves us and desires a deep relationship with us, that He allows our faith to be tested by trials.

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. James 1:2-4

James regarded trials as inevitable - he said **when**, not *if* you fall into various trials. **Fall** = not go in step by step, but precipitated, plunged - so surrounded that there is no escaping them. **Knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience** - the Greek word *hupomone* is not passive waiting but an active endurance; not like the patience you have to sit in the doctor's waiting room but more like the patience that helps you finish running a marathon. A Greek commentator said this word patience described "the frame of mind which endures."

Trials do not produce faith but rather reveal what faith we already have; not because God doesn't know how much faith we have, but so that our faith will be evident to us and to those around us. How we receive trials has a great bearing on the outcome of the trial. James exhorts us to count it all joy in the midst of trials. Needless to say, our initial response is usually not joy but we can choose to change it. *Counting it all joy* is faith's response to a time of trial. And as we trust God and His Word, our faith will increase.

When you wonder why God has allowed suffering, remember:

- being tested by fire will make you stronger and purer in faith as you remain steadfast through hardship
- we can have hope & courage in the face of adversity if we understand that, through it all, God is working His purposes for our good (Romans 8:28)
- James said that a Christian who perseveres under trial is blessed "because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him" (James 1:12)
- Faith that stays true through every fiery test is more valuable than the finest, purest gold.



For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Romans 8:18