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Moses: Don't Be Afraid!

718-B

Series: God's Living Legends (Part 1)

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Don't Be Afraid!

Father,

There are not really even words to express the joy that's in our hearts when that one word, Jesus, is spoken. Our hearts race back to the day when Christ came into our hearts and transformed us and made us new men and women in Him. Our minds are reminded of life before we knew Him. Our minds race forward to that which is ahead because He died for us. As we think this morning, upon that one word, Jesus, we realize the very courts of heaven are silenced and our hearts race within us with joy and expectation.

We thank You this morning, Father, that You've allowed us to gather together, but we realize in a group this size, there are many who are struggling. There are some, who just seem to have no hope. There are others who seem to fear the very presence of life itself and others who fear the very presence of death itself. There are those here this morning, Father, with smiles on their faces, but broken hearts because of their marriages, because of their children, because of their jobs, because of their health, because of relationships, because of those they love.

We have come together this morning, Father, to hear from You, so we would pray that in spite of the teacher, because You will be our teacher, we can learn from You. We humble ourselves in Your presence, Father, and as we pray, open our eyes that we may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.

In Jesus' Name,

Amen.

We continue our journey this morning, walking in the footsteps of an incredible man of God named Moses. As we come to this next experience in Moses' life, we cannot help but be overcome with the parallels that we can draw from Moses' experience and ours. I trust that in the process, this morning, our minds will

Don't Be Afraid!

be taken back to times in our own lives when we have faced seemingly insurmountable odds, crises that seemed to have no way of escape, because that's what Moses faces today.

Many of you remember in your own experience, that whenever God is about to do something really great in your life, there seems to be certain ingredients present.

Ingredient one is that there seems to be something in front of you that seems to be an immovable object. Number two is that there seems to be something behind you that seems to be a rumbling of the enemy's footsteps. Thirdly, there seems to be within us at some point in time, a sense of fear or danger or panic. And the eyes of our heart turn toward the circumstances rather than to God, and we seem to be so afraid.

Lastly, and almost always, there's a moment of truth. There's some point in the experience when God through His word, speaks to us and says to us, "Wait a minute. You don't have any reason to be afraid. Stop it. Don't be afraid. Stand still. Look at Me." It seems to me that whenever we do that, the obstacle itself that seems so huge in our pathway, we find was designed by a sovereign God to invite the enemy into conflict so He could be the victor

You think about it. That's a part of what life is all about. Life is a combat zone for the Christian where a battle is being waged between God and Satan and every experience in our life is part of the battlefield. It's not a spiritual nursing home where we crawl up and go to bed and ask God to take care of us whenever we have a problem.

The truth of the matter is that Scripture says this is a real conflict. We aren't wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers and rulers of the darkness of this world and spiritual wickedness in high places. And the conflict is between God and Satan. The circumstances we hate so much, that we cry out against, are the very battlefields where God's greatest victories are won. And that's the backdrop for this morning's story around the living legend of Moses.

The children of Israel have been set free from captivity. They've been in bondage for over 400 years. Now, they are free to follow Moses and Aaron into the Promised Land where they envisioned they would settle down to be waited on by God and live happily ever after. Right? I mean they earned it. Right? Well, they forgot a

Don't Be Afraid!

couple things. They forgot about the enemy. He's still in the land. They forgot about the difficult course of maintaining the peace. And they never fully grasped, perhaps, the depth of the fact that God's promises are not just for our deliverance; they are for His glory. We forget that sometimes, don't we?

So, God decided it's time for another lesson. He's not only going to rescue His people, He's going to teach His people and hopefully, teach us some more about the wonderful ways of God.

So, our lesson this morning is entitled, *Don't Be Afraid*. And it's a trip through the 14th chapter of the book of Exodus. Here is an outline for those of you who liketh outlines:

- I- The Plan (Exodus 14:1-4)
- II- The Pursuit (Exodus 14:5-9)
- III- The Panic (Exodus 14:10-12)
- IV- The Prescription (Exodus 14:13-14)
- V- The Parting (Exodus 14:15-31)

Are you ready? As ready as you'll get. Okay. Let's go. Let's pull back the curtains and let's look at the story first.

THE PLAN

The first thing we need to notice about this incident was God was not seated in the heavens, caught offguard, taken by surprise. God in eternity past knew of this moment and He was preparing to use Satan's offensive against him. He always has a plan. He has a plan in our lives as well. We just don't stop to realize it very often.

Exodus 14. Let's begin with verse 1,

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying:

Speak unto the children of Israel and [and see] that they turn and encamp before Pihahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baalzephon: before it shall ye encamp by the sea. (Exodus 14:1,2)

Now, Baal-zephon was supposedly the secret residence of Typhon, one of the evil Egyptian gods and this is one more opportunity for God to crush into bits one more of these false gods.

For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, they are entangled in the land [they are lost], the wilderness hath shut them in. (Exodus 14:3)

Don't Be Afraid!

Aha! Now, the aha is in the original, but it's further down.

And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them; and I will be honored upon Pharaoh and upon all his host; that the Egyptians may [what?] know that I am the LORD. And they did so. (Exodus 14:4)

That's a miracle in itself, isn't it? Now up to this point, the journey of Israel was in a southeasterly direction and if they had continued on this course, it would have carried them into the eastern border of Egypt and into direct conflict, perhaps, with the Egyptian forces. Now, through Moses, God redirected their route, changed their direction, and if I had been one of those Israelites, or you had been, you would have scratched your head and said, "Wait a minute. This is a dead end we're headed toward."

They went into a southwesterly direction, which was about to bring them into two great bodies of water, which stood between them and the Sinai Peninsula to the east. God had chosen the most unusual route. He always does. This course of action, obviously, was going to lead them into possibly being hemmed in and surrounded. He does that.

In fact, you may think in your own life that God has planned your life the same way. You may have thought you were on a straight line toward the land of milk and honey and suddenly you looked up and saw this big sign that said, uh oh, Road Closed—Detour. And you found yourself on one of life's bumpy backroads, not where you thought you would be, and you seem to be headed nowhere fast. Just remember, God's routes are always different, but they lead to God's will.

As we remember from last week, He seldom takes the main road. Now this particular passage gives us two reasons for that.

Reason 1- He likes to confuse the enemy. It's not that hard. "Pharaoh will think," God' said, "My people are lost, wandering around in the wilderness confused, so I will harden their hearts and Pharaoh will come galloping after you." Ta dum, ta dum ta dum! See, God wasn't surprised at the enemy's attack. He planned the circumstances that would coax the enemy out in the open so He could let him have it. God knows how to lead the enemy on.

Reason 2- God wanted to reveal His power. You may remember, from two or three weeks ago, we talked about what it takes for God to reveal His power. The more resistance you have, the more

Don't Be Afraid!

power is required to overcome that resistance. If you have a car that's sleek and has very little wind resistance, it takes less power to run it. But you pile luggage on top of that car and you create a lot of wind resistance, then what does it take? It takes more power. And so, God does that. He says, "I will be honored upon Pharaoh and all of his host, so that, the Egyptians might know that I AM is the Lord. So, I'm going to draw the enemy into conflict in order to show His people who I am."

Now, God could have done what we would have done, couldn't He? What would we have done if we had been God? Well, we would have packed up our children and said, "You've suffered enough." And we would have taken the children of Israel off into another country and we would have fed them big grapes for the rest of their lives and they would have lived happily ever after. Right?

God had a better plan in mind because He had a mission. His mission was to bring His children into tough places and then deliver them to glorify His name. His plan for us is often the same. So often He'll lead us into a situation of vulnerability where the enemy will be fooled into thinking we've had it. And He'll bring us into a situation where Satan thinks we can't make it. Then God will allow that circumstance to draw the enemy out in the open and Satan is ultimately the one who loses. You watch for it.

The question I have, and the question you ought to have is, why are we so surprised? In fact, why don't we actually get excited when those situations come into our lives because we know what's happening? Isn't that what He did for Jesus? I mean, you think about it. Wasn't Calvary the Red Sea for Jesus? There was no way out. Satan was wringing His hands with glee. "I've got Him! I've got Him! I've got Him!" Yet, it turned out to be God's greatest hour, and Satan's greatest hour of defeat.

THE PURSUIT

So that was the plan. Now for the pursuit in verse 5, the enemy buys it. He always does.

And it was told to the king of Egypt that the people fled: and the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people, and they said, Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us? (Exodus 14:5)

Isn't that neat? We let go of all that cheap labor. How many

Don't Be Afraid!

of you think you've got a bad memory? Now, you think about it. They forgot the locusts already, the hail, the serpents, the river of blood, the flies, and the land filled with funerals of their firstborn. They've already forgotten what it was like, and they forgot that it was the hand of God that set His people free. They had acknowledged that. And now, they say, "Why did we let them go?"

So, Pharaoh calls a cabinet meeting, and says, "We've got to do something. These freed captives will be sitting ducks in a pond of confusion. Let's go get them." And everybody agreed.

And he made ready his chariot, and took his people with him:

And he took six hundred chosen chariots, and all of the chariots of Egypt, and captains over every one of them.

And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children of Israel: and the children of Israel went out with an high hand.

But the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pi-hahiroth, before Baal-zephon. (Exodus 14:6-9)

So, the children of Israel went out with a high hand. Not a dog barked against them, you remember. A good translation is, they went out with great confidence. They've got it made. At last, after 400 years they were free. But listen, there's a sound in the background. It sounds like thundering hooves. Ta dum, ta dum, ta dum.

Now, humanly speaking, the Egyptian military had everything going for them. Number one, their esteemed leader, their commander in chief, decided he was going to lead them into battle. Bad move. So defiant was this mad monarch against the hand of God that verse 6 says he climbed into his own chariot and charged after God, waving at the crowd saying, "Come on. Let's go. We're going to have a massacre." And sure enough, they did.

Secondly, not only did they have this hard-hearted henchman at the helm, they had their entire chariot fleet girded for battle. It says here, there was a band of 600 choice Marines, who apparently didn't know what it was to lose, but then they had never fought the living God. Pharaoh's horses, chariots and horsemen—all

Don't Be Afraid!

of them joined in the pursuit. How many were there? Josephus estimates that there were at least a quarter of a million—250,000 of them. What a great time it would have been to attack Egypt from the other side. Anyway, it was not a very good military move, but men are not known to use reason when they go chasing after God.

THE PANIC

Imagine we're in a helicopter now, and we're flying over the Hebrew camp. It looks like the biggest church picnic in history. They're sitting by the river. They're waiting for God's next orders, having a little R&R. They're having hot dogs and all this good stuff, and they are just having a ball.

Now, take your binoculars and turn northward just a little bit. What do you see? It looks like the rest of the world is coming down about to get them at breakneck speed. In front of them is a raging sea; behind them is a raving maniac. Now, how are they going to respond? Just the way we do. Right? They're going to say, "Well, God, you brought us here and You're in charge. Praise the Lord." Right? How many of you respond that way? "God it's Your battle." Sure, they responded that way.

And when Pharaoh drew nigh [that is, they could hear the hoof beats], the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; [were coming, ta dum, ta dum and they were scared spitless. That's the real translation], and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out to the LORD.

And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? [Big deal. Why did you do this to us?]

Is this not the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, [didn't we tell you so] saying, leave us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? [We loved it there.] For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than to die in the wilderness.

(Exodus 14:10-12)

Doesn't pressure bring out the best in us? I mean, the Egyptians weren't the only ones with short memories. These Hebrews had just been protected from all of these plagues through miracles. They had been protected from a siege of murders, which had cost the life of every firstborn Egyptian, and not so much as a dog had barked against them. They had been escorted out of

Don't Be Afraid!

town by a frenzied mob of mourners laden with gold and silver. They literally experienced the presence of God with a cloud in the daytime and a pillar of fire at night. They had been hand-carried out of Egypt by Jehovah. Now, they are saying, "But, God. What have you done for me today?"

I trust you can't relate, but maybe some of you can. Doesn't it sound just a little bit like us? There wasn't room enough to bury us all in Egypt, hey Moses? So, you led us out here where there was lots of land, under starry skies above. We told you so Moses. Didn't we tell you, leave us alone? We were having a ball in Egypt. You know, finding straw, making bricks. It was so much fun. Those were the good ole days, before we were set free.

Now, we've got this battle on our hands, and it looks like there's no way to win. Did you ever ask yourself that? How could you so quickly forget what it was like to be in bondage? How could you cry out against God for circumstances, when He has delivered you from the enemy? That's why God wants us to write it down.

THE PRESCRIPTION

So, the pursuit leads to panic, the panic to rebellion, the rebellion to pandemonium, except that Moses intervenes. He stands up and there's a hush among the crowd. He's not tongue-tied anymore, you notice. "Maybe he's got a surprise battle plan", they said. "We'll do it. Let's see what he's got to say."

Here's his battle plan. Would you memorize it, please?

And Moses said to the people, Fear ye not, . . .

(Exodus 14:13)

Don't be afraid. Here's what I want you to do.

And if you're here today, and you're living in fear this is what He wants you to do. He said, "Don't be afraid. I want you to,"

...stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will show to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever.

(Exodus 14:13 continued)

I love that phrase. Again, no more forever.

The Lord will fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.

(Exodus 14:14)

Just relax. What a memory verse. When you're hemmed in by

Don't Be Afraid!

circumstances, the enemy is breathing down your neck, you're doubting the wisdom of following God's way because it looks like a dead end, and you look like you're the one who will be dead in the end. And God speaks and He says, "Wait a minute. Don't you be afraid. Stand still. I want you to see what I'm about to do."

Have you ever taken a good look at what the Bible says about fear? It says that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, of love and of a sound mind (II Timothy 1:7). So, we know where it comes from. It comes from Satan. The first step is to reject it. The problem in most of us as Christians is that we talk about fear as if it's an emotion. There are emotions that accompany fear. Fear is not an emotion. Fear is a choice. God says over and over in Scripture, "Do not be afraid." It's a command. "Fear ye not. Don't be afraid, don't be afraid, don't be afraid!"

You see, there are emotions that follow, but fear is a choice. It's a choice. It is a choice to relinquish faith. Faith is the opposite of fear. When you choose to fear you are choosing not to have faith. God is saying, "Relax. Fear not." And when we make that choice, suddenly the waters are calm; the circumstances may be the same but the waters around us are calm. We enter into the eye of the storm and we rest.

Some of you here this morning will tell me you're in the midst of problems that have no end. They go on and on. You pray and nothing happens week after week. Are you afraid? Listen to what God said to Abraham in the same situation in Genesis 15:1. Memorize it. He said:

Fear not, Abram: for I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward. (Genesis 15:1b)

Give that verse to Satan.

These are some of the fears that beset us as believers.

- Are you afraid for your children? So was Hagar in Genesis 21:17.

What aileth thee, Hagar? Fear not: for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. (Genesis 21:17b)

God knew where he was going.

- Are you afraid of an unknown assignment, a new job, a new ministry, a new relationship? Listen to Jacob in Genesis 46:3. God spoke to him and said Jacob:

Don't Be Afraid!

...I am God, the God of thy father, fear not to go down into Egypt. (Genesis 46:3)

Tell you what, He says, "You and I will go down together."

I will go down with thee into Egypt. (Genesis 46:4)

That makes a difference, folks.

- Are you afraid of the enemy? Moses was surrounded by nothing but a disaster in Numbers 14:9. And this is what God said:

Only rebel not against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defense is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not.

(Numbers 14:9)

Their defense is gone, the Lord is with us, don't be afraid.

- Are you afraid of the unknown? Joshua 1:9, God said to Joshua,

Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage [make a choice]; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed [or despondent or depressed]; for the LORD Thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest. (Joshua 1:9)

- Are you afraid you'll never be able to finish what you started? Look at Solomon, I Chronicles 28:20. God said,

Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD. (I Chronicles 28:20)

- Are you afraid of the odds? Like the children of Israel, does it look like everything in front of you and everything behind you has you outnumbered? Listen to Elisha in II Kings 6:15. His servant felt the same way.

And when the servant of the man of God [Elisha] was risen early, and gone forth, behold, a host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him [uh oh]. Alas, my master! how shall we do? [Good question.]

And he [Elisha] answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.

And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray Thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountains was

Don't Be Afraid!

full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

(II Kings 6:15-17)

There was an angelic army around him and the battle was already won.

- Are you afraid in the midst of the pressures of life's storms? So was Paul in Acts 27:24, and God said:

Fear not, Paul [you have to go through this]; Thou must be brought before Caesar [but I have a plan]; and, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. (Acts 27:24)

Even before he was shipwrecked in verse 25, he turned to the people and said, God has spoken to me and said, "Fear not. And this is my response", Paul said.

Wherefore sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. (Acts 27:25)

It's a choice.

- Are you afraid of men or nations of great power? Does the world situation cause you to tremble? Numbers 21:34, Moses was in the same situation.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Fear him not: for I have delivered him into thy hand. (Numbers 21:34a)

- Are you afraid of an encounter with God? Are you afraid to spend time with Him? Are you afraid you cannot abide in His presence? Listen to Exodus 20:19,

And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

And Moses said to the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you. (Exodus 20:19-20a)

- Are you afraid of the times in which we live? In the latter days, it seems to be more than you can handle and you wonder what lies beyond? Isaiah 35:3-6 says,

Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.

Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He will come and save you.

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

Then shall the lame man leap as an hart [like a deer], and the tongue of the dumb man sing: for in the wilderness shall

Don't Be Afraid!

waters break out, and streams in the desert.

(Isaiah 35:3-6)

- Are you afraid of dying or facing death with a loved one? God speaks in Psalm 23,

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will [what?] fear no evil: [why?] for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. (Psalm 23:4)

- Are you afraid of evil men?

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
(Psalm 27:1)

- Are you afraid God will lose His grip on you? Read Romans 8:14 and on,

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; (Romans 8:14-17a)

In the midst of the conflict, in the midst of the confusion, in the midst of the crisis, God's word is always the same, "Don't be afraid. Stand still and watch what I can do!" You see that's God's prescription for the acid indigestion of fear. Well, let's do what God said. Let's stand still and see what He is going to do.

THE PARTING

The Lord said to Moses, "Mo, what's the matter with you?" Loose translation. He said to Moses, "Why are you crying out? You go back and talk to the children of Israel and tell them to move on. Tell them to go forward." Hello. Go forward? Lord, have you looked lately?

And the Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward.

But lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.

(Exodus 14:15,16 NKJV)

Don't Be Afraid!

And the angel of God who went before the camp of Israel removed and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before their face, and stood between them:

And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud of darkness to them [the Egyptians], but it gave light by night to these [God's children]: so that the one came not near the other all the night.
(Exodus 14:19,20)

Isn't that funny? That's what God's presence does.

And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them [congealed like Jello on both sides] on their right hand, and on their left.

And the Egyptians pursued and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots and his horsemen.

And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the LORD looked down unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians,

And took off their chariot wheels, that they drove heavily [and that made it kind of hard to drive]: so that the Egyptians said, [uh oh] Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them [duh] against the Egyptians.

(Exodus 14:21-25)

They got it. They had forgotten, hadn't they? It hadn't been very many weeks before that they made that same statement. Now they remembered, *the Lord fights for these guys*.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out your hand over the sea that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.

And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; then the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.

And the waters returned, and covered the chariots and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them...

(Exodus 14:26-28)

Don't Be Afraid!

And here is your key phrase,

...and there remained [how much?] not so much as one of them.

But the children of Israel walked on dry land in the midst of the sea and the waters were a wall to them...

Thus, the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore.
(Exodus 14:28 cont.-30)

Now folks, if you don't hear a trumpet blast in the background and if you don't get just a little bit excited, you're dead. God said, "Moses, you can take your rod, and it's bath time for the Egyptians." God was saying to Pharaoh, "Sorry, this parting is such sweet sorrow." (That's the same kind of response I got in the first class, so it probably wasn't worth much.)

Verse 31 says Israel saw the great work that the Lord had done and the people revered the Lord and believed Him, and they believed Moses. It's what they were looking for—a miracle! As long as the miracles were coming, they believed God. They said, "God, you did your part," (if you pardon the pun). I got one laugh, that's worth something!

Anyway, one of the greatest miracles in history had just taken place and the children of Israel witnessed it and they acknowledged it was of God. And the pursuers were right in the middle of the sea when God loosened their lug nuts, and their chariot wheels began to slip, and they said "Uh oh. The Master Mechanic has worked on my fleet again." And, they tried to turn and run and God pulled the plug. Moses is on one side singing, "How Dry I Am." Pharaoh is on the other side singing "Don't Rain on My Parade."

Meanwhile, the whole army goes down into a watery grave and at least, for a moment, the children of Israel said, "God did that!" He revealed Himself, by leading His children. How? Down a blind alley to a deadend street until the enemy wringing his hands with glee said, "I got them." And the pursuer attacked and they appeared to be trapped. And God said, "Now! Don't be afraid. Stand still. Watch Me." And they had no choice. So, they stood still and they watched Him.

Now, let's take this lesson in context of our own lives. Some of you in this room and some of you listening seem to think that God has hemmed you in. There's a Red Sea in front of you, a set

Don't Be Afraid!

of circumstances that are turbulent, raging, endless, no hope—too fierce to swim, too deep to walk through. And the footsteps of the enemy always seem to be right behind you and there are too many to fight and they are too close to flee. And you're scared!

God hasn't seemed to answer your prayers. You may be afraid for your children because they are so swallowed up by the pressures of the world. You may be afraid of the unknown; that journey into who knows where that seems before you. You may be afraid of the enemy and the hold he seems to have on those you love, or on your own life. You may be fearful over a task you are called to, that you think you'll never be able to finish. You may be fearful over the odds that seem so stacked against you. Maybe you're fearful of the present storm in your life and your being shipwrecked like Paul. You may be fearful of men and nations or the cloud of gloom and despair that hangs over the last days of this age before the curtain rises on the final act of God.

Beloved, I want to remind you, God has the answer. Beloved, the answer is a choice. He says, "Don't be afraid. Choose not to be afraid." And then he says, "Why? For lo, the angel of the Lord encamps around about them that fear Him and delivers them." Or we can pray with Elisha. He says, "Open the eyes of thy servant to see. Lo, the mountains are filled with chariots of angels."

You see, we just thought there was no way out. But they that be with us are more than they that be with them. So, don't be afraid. Just stand still! Perfectly still! Now look at God. He will fight the battle, the way will open, the enemy will be drowned and you will be amazed. Will you say it with me one last time? Don't be afraid! Just stand still and see what God can do!

DON'T BE AFRAID

"Fear not," said Moses, "Just stand still
And watch what God can do!
I'll wave the rod of God and lo—
That sea will part for you.

"You'll walk across without a drop
And reach the other side,
But God will overflow your foe
Till everyone has died!"

(continued next page)

Don't Be Afraid!

And so, it was, at God's command
God set His people free,
And every single child of God
Fled safely through the sea.

Then God, the enemy confused,
They panicked, turned around
And tried to flee the wrath of God
And every man was drowned.

Yet, just an hour or two before
Oh, how God's children cried
And rued their circumstance
As though God's man had lied.

Until they heard a Word from God
As Moses stood and prayed,
And simply shared God's Word
Which was, "Don't be afraid."

"Stand still, and see what God can do."
Then scales fell from their eyes
And like Elisha, they could see
How angels rimmed the skies.

And cannot we, when we like they
Are paralyzed with fear,
Just stop and hear the voice of God
Speak softly in our ear?

"Don't be afraid, my child, I'm here.
I'll part that sea for you.
Don't be afraid, just look at Me,
Just watch what I can do."

Do not fear, my Christian friend,
For only time will tell
Of how the God of Israel
Delivered you as well.

Cease now, crying out in pain,
"Why, God, this raging sea?"
It is to drown your captors
So, God can set you free.

Don't Be Afraid!

Stop weeping, child, stop weeping,
No need to be dismayed,
Just stand still and look at God
And you won't be afraid!

Let's pray,

Our Father and our God, we worship You and we don't want to be afraid anymore.

In Jesus' Name,

Amen.

For Focus and Application

1- Get a Bible map and look at the route God used to lead His people out of bondage. Why was it such an indirect route? Why did He lead them to a seemingly insurmountable dead end? What are the two reasons listed on page four that God often takes us away from the "main road"?

2- Make a list of the things that humanly speaking gave Egypt such an edge in this conflict. How can this be likened to the *apparent edge Satan seems to have in this world?*

3- The children of Israel were not expecting a conflict. They thought that because *God led them out of bondage, the conflict was over*. Why is that reasoning false?

4- How did the children of Israel respond when they realized that they were surrounded by the enemy? What emotion characterized their response? What is the opposite of that emotion? What had happened to their memories? How long had it taken for them to forget?

5- Memorize Exodus 14:13,14. Find two other passages in Scripture that say the same thing. Weave them together into a "thread of verses" to memorize and meditate on. Ask God to bring them back to your heart *every time Satan tempts you to be afraid*.

6- Take the verses on pages 9 and 10 and use those as the basis for a "thread of verses" on the kinds of things we fear and God's response to those temptations. What significance do you place on the fact that God commanded us to "fear not". Is it a choice? How do you exercise it when the enemy has your emotions running wild?

Don't Be Afraid!

7- Describe a "Red Sea" that God has had you to cross. Describe the feelings you had as you approached that seemingly tragic dead end, with what seemed to be no place to turn. What did God do? What did God say? How did you respond? How would you handle it differently the next time? Make a list of the things you are currently afraid of. Be honest. Now take the passages we have studied in this lesson and pray them back to God. Let God use them to fill you with faith until your fears have fled. Praise Him in advance that He will do it.

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