

# Explore the Bible: December 29

*Power Revealed • Exodus 14:19-31*

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The hardening of Pharaoh's heart makes for an interesting study. Pharaoh hardened his own heart long before God locked him into his rebellious spirit by hardening his heart permanently. The plagues God sent against the Egyptians were an example of divine, retributive justice, repaying Pharaoh

and his people for the harsh treatment they meted out to God's people.

### **The Escape (Ex. 14:19-22)**

God was directly involved in Israel's deliverance of from Egypt (Ex.14:19). His presence was depicted as "the Angel of God." In military terms, the Angel moved from leading the people, to a rear-guard position between the Egyptian and Israelite armies.

God's presence also was depicted as "the pillar of cloud," which also moved from in front of the people to the rear-guard position. This cloud "lit up the night," preventing either camp from engaging in battle (Ex. 14:20). God would deliver His people His way.

The location of the crossing of the Red Sea is not known. What is known is that God provided Israel deliverance from Egyptian bondage. He provided them protection from the superior Egyptian forces. Moreover, He provided them a dry path through the midst of the sea.

In Exodus 14:21a, we see Moses and God synergistically working toward God's goal of deliverance. Moses did his part in the divine plan. Yet, it was God who commanded the powerful east wind to blow against the sea, turning it into dry land. Thus, the sea was divided and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left (Ex. 14:21b-22).

### **The Defeat (Ex. 14:23-28)**

The proud Pharaoh and his confident military chased the Israelites through the sea (Ex. 14:23). Their confidence would soon hit the brick wall of God's sovereignty. "The Lord looked down on the Egyptian forces from the pillar of fire and cloud," throwing them into confusion, from the Hebrew word meaning "to move noisily" among them. The Lord also caused

their chariots to swerve and drive with difficulty. The Egyptian forces knew immediately, the Lord was their enemy, not the former slaves (Ex. 14:24-25).

Then the Lord, instructed Moses to stretch out his staff over the sea that the waters would come back on the entire Egyptian military. Moses' obedience resulted in the drowning of the enemy soldiers. "None of them survived" (14:26-28).

Ironically, the path of deliverance for God's people became the path of judgment for Pharaoh's forces. So, it shall be when Christ comes again. For His people, it will be a day of great joy and celebration, but for those who set themselves against the Lord, it will be a day of judgment and separation. Like the Egyptian army in Moses' day, of those who do not know Jesus when He comes, "none of them" will survive.

### **The Powerful one (Ex. 14:29-31)**

Exodus 14:29 reminds us through the ages God is able to deliver His people. The Red Sea's depths became dry ground, *yabbashah* in Hebrew. The walls of water standing to Israel's right and to their left were under the Lord's power. The seemingly impenetrable barrier of the sea stepped aside to let God's people move through safely.

Two important things occurred simultaneously. First, the Lord saved Israel that day from Egyptian power. Second, Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore (Ex. 14:30). The word "power" in the CSB derives from the Hebrew word "hand." What happened that day at the Sea fulfilled what the Lord had predicted (Ex. 6:1). God's mighty hand would result in Pharaoh sending out the Hebrew slaves and by His mighty hand Pharaoh would drive them from his land .

Our study closes with the affirmation that the great power of the Lord, literally "the great hand," was responsible for the Egyptian defeat. The immediate result was a reverence for the Lord and a faith (Hebrew *'aman* ) in Him and Moses (Ex. 14:31).

May we learn the lesson of the sea. No matter how difficult our circumstances or determined our detractors, Christ-followers can revere the Lord and trust Him for deliverance.

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