

# When the Enemy Pursues Part 1

2.21.2021

Exodus Series

Message 7

Exodus 14:1–31 (CSB)

Then the LORD spoke to Moses: <sup>2</sup>“Tell the Israelites to turn back and camp in front of Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea; you must camp in front of Baal-zephon, facing it by the sea. <sup>3</sup>Pharaoh will say of the Israelites: They are wandering around the land in confusion; the wilderness has boxed them in. <sup>4</sup>I will harden Pharaoh’s heart so that he will pursue them. Then I will receive glory by means of Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD.” So the Israelites did this.

## THE EGYPTIAN PURSUIT

<sup>5</sup>When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his officials changed their minds about the people and said, “What have we done? We have released Israel from serving us.” <sup>6</sup>So he got his chariot ready and took his troops with him; <sup>7</sup>he took six hundred of the best chariots and all the rest of the chariots of Egypt, with officers in each one. <sup>8</sup>The LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the Israelites, who were going out defiantly. <sup>9</sup>The Egyptians—all Pharaoh’s horses and chariots, his horsemen, and his army—chased after them and caught up with them as they camped by the sea beside Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon.

<sup>10</sup>As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up and there were the Egyptians coming after them! The Israelites were terrified and cried out to the LORD for help. <sup>11</sup>They said to Moses, “Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? <sup>12</sup>Isn’t this what we told you in Egypt: Leave us alone so that we may serve the Egyptians? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.”

<sup>13</sup>But Moses said to the people, "Don't be afraid. Stand firm and see the LORD's salvation that he will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians you see today, you will never see again. <sup>14</sup>The LORD will fight for you, and you must be quiet."

<sup>15</sup>The LORD said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to break camp. <sup>16</sup>As for you, lift up your staff, stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide it so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground. <sup>17</sup>As for me, I am going to harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them, and I will receive glory by means of Pharaoh, all his army, and his chariots and horsemen. <sup>18</sup>The Egyptians will know that I am the LORD when I receive glory through Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen."

<sup>19</sup>Then the angel of God, who was going in front of the Israelite forces, moved and went behind them. The pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and stood behind them. <sup>20</sup>It came between the Egyptian and Israelite forces. There was cloud and darkness, it lit up the night, and neither group came near the other all night long.

<sup>21</sup>Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The LORD drove the sea back with a powerful east wind all that night and turned the sea into dry land. So the waters were divided, <sup>22</sup>and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with the waters like a wall to them on their right and their left.

<sup>23</sup>The Egyptians set out in pursuit—all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen—and went into the sea after them. <sup>24</sup>During the morning watch, the LORD looked down at the Egyptian forces from the pillar of fire and cloud, and threw the Egyptian forces into confusion. <sup>25</sup>He caused their chariot wheels to swerve and made them drive with difficulty. "Let's get away from Israel," the Egyptians said, "because the LORD is fighting for them against Egypt!"

<sup>26</sup>Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the water may come back on the Egyptians, on their chariots and horsemen." <sup>27</sup>So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at daybreak the sea returned to its normal depth. While the Egyptians were trying to escape from it, the LORD threw them into the sea. <sup>28</sup>The water came back and covered the chariots and horsemen, plus the entire army of Pharaoh that had gone after them into the sea. Not even one of them survived.

<sup>29</sup> But the Israelites had walked through the sea on dry ground, with the waters like a wall to them on their right and their left. <sup>30</sup> That day the LORD saved Israel from the power of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. <sup>31</sup> When Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD and believed in him and in his servant Moses.

## 1. Pharaoh is recovering from defeat.

### A. Egypt is finalizing the burials of the firstborn.

1. We can imagine that every mortician and embalmer worked every waking hour.
2. The poor and many others were buried anyway possible, as every household in Egypt experienced death.
3. The shock to the Egyptians would have been impossible to describe.

### B. Yet, even the worst shocks wear off.

1. Often, when the shock wears off, we are left with raw emotion.
2. Anger, hatred, regret, and pride all expose themselves in their vilest form.
3. Remember that you are most vulnerable after a great shock or trauma.
  - a. Many of the worst acts of brutality have occurred in response to a traumatic event.
  - b. "Hurting people hurt people."
  - c. But that doesn't justify sinful behavior.

## 2. Pharaoh is already defeated, but he doesn't understand that.

- ### A. He doesn't grasp the depth of his defeat, the extent of his defeat, or the totality of his defeat.

1. As the shock of the plagues wears off, He still thinks he has a chance to defeat God's people.
2. He still thinks he can return them to slavery.
3. He still believes that he can keep them from worshipping their God.

**B. What Pharaoh doesn't understand is that the Blood of the Passover Lamb signaled his complete and utter destruction.**

1. It was in the waters of the Red Sea that Pharaoh's chariots drowned, but their defeat was determined by the Blood of the Lambs.
2. Pharaoh was defeated before his army ever mounted their chariots.

**C. A defeated enemy is still dangerous. (Beware an enemy with nothing to lose).**

1. Of course, Pharaoh doesn't know how defeated he is.
2. He hasn't read Exodus or watched the 10 Commandments movie starring Charlton Heston.
3. He thinks there is still a chance, so he pursues what looks like a perfect opportunity.

**D. Israel appears to be lost in the wilderness.**

1. Pharaoh knows that Israel has been boxed in, with the wilderness and the Red Sea stopping the possibility of escape.
2. What Pharaoh doesn't know is that God has set a trap to destroy Egypt's pride and military power.
3. Again, Pharaoh does not realize how defeated he is.

**3. Israel doesn't realize how victorious she was.**

**A. The Presence of God is leading Israel.**

1. There is something standing like a cloud by day and a fire by night.

2. Exodus 14 tells us this is the Angel of the Lord.
3. Israel just saw God do ten amazing miracles in Egypt, leading to the defeat of the greatest nation of their day.

B. But it doesn't take long for the people to panic.

1. When we forget what God has done, we forget what God can do.
2. It seems that, for most people, the effect of a miracle only lasts until the next crisis.
3. We easily forget that Christ never changes.
  - a. We change.
  - b. Our situation changes.
  - c. But Jesus does not.

C. Israel, with her backs against the water and their escape boxed in by the wilderness did not realize the totality of the victory.

1. They didn't realize that the blood of the lambs on Passover symbolized more than a momentary victory.
2. Their victory over Egypt was assured.
  - a. Their deliverance guaranteed.
  - b. Their freedom supplied.
3. They still had a sea to cross, but their deliverance was assured.

D. "Though it looks like I'm surrounded, I'm surrounded by you."

1. This is the promise of God's people.
2. Next week, we will give more details on what we are to do when the Enemy pursues.
3. But for now, I want you to think about the power of God on display here.

#### 4. God coordinates the victory at the Red Sea.

##### A. He leads Egypt into a trap.

1. He uses His presence to defend Israel and stop Egypt.
2. He manipulates the elements to His purpose.
3. He makes paths for the feet of Israel.
4. Those paths become traps for Egypt's chariots.

##### B. Israel is entirely defenseless in her power, yet she has the best protection.

1. Think about it:
2. Israel panics because she doesn't have any weapons.
3. 600 chariots and their warriors would have been enough to defeat a defenseless people.
4. BUT GOD was on the scene.

##### C. God used Israel's humble position to demonstrate His absolute power.

1. You may find yourself in a humble position.
2. You don't have the money to fix all of your problems.
3. It seems like the enemy keeps knocking you down, and you wonder how you keep getting back up.
4. You look and realize that your enemy has more of everything than you do.
5. Yet, as a believer, you have something they don't: The Presence and Power of God.

#### 5. If the enemy is defeated, why does he keep attacking?

##### A. The guarantee of defeat did not keep Pharaoh humble.

1. The guarantee of victory did not keep Israel from fear.
2. Satan is pursuing us, although we know that he is defeated.

3. But he doesn't yet grasp the totality of his defeat or the completeness of Jesus' victory.

B. So why does the enemy keep attacking? We actually do not know what Satan is thinking:

1. His thoughts are not recorded in the Bible, but God's is.
2. His plan is not described, except to Steal, kill, and destroy.
3. Satan is a minor character that God uses to bring about total and complete victory.
4. Someone has to lose, and it isn't Jesus!

C. Yet, Satan pursues.

1. Like Pharaoh, he doesn't want to see people set free or delivered.
2. He doesn't want to see God's people worship or prosper.
3. So, Satan rages.
4. He rages in defeat, but he rages.

D. Where do we fit in here?

1. In many ways, we are like Israel in this story.
2. Our victory over sin and death is guaranteed by nothing less than the Blood of Jesus.
3. Jesus' victory over the power of sin was paid for at the Cross.
4. Yet, Satan rages.

6. Each time Israel faces an obstacle, she wants to quit.

A. Part of that has to do with wrong expectations and misunderstandings.

1. We tend to expect to fight one battle and be done.
2. We misunderstand the nature of the Christian life.

3. Jesus didn't say, "wait here, and after I am resurrected you will never have any more problems!"

a. God didn't tell Israel that there would be no Red Seas to cross or Jericho's to conquer after the Passover.

b. Yet we believe that things should get more comfortable as we go.

c. Are things getting more comfortable for you? Cause they are not for me.

4. In fact, I'm becoming more aware than ever of the level of spiritual warfare that is taking place.

a. I'm becoming more aware of the importance of staying connected to Jesus and what Jesus, Paul, and John meant by endurance, perseverance, and overcoming.

b. It is becoming clearer why Paul said, "We fight not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers..."

c. It is becoming clearer what Jesus meant "In this world you will have trouble: But I have overcome the world."

B. Believers need to understand that there is still a final battle to win.

1. There is coming a day when a final battle will be waged.

2. Satan, and his armies, will be completely defeated and cast into the Lake of Fire.

3. Yet, there are still battles to be fought and won today.

a. Someday, the pull and power of Egypt will be behind you.

b. Someday, the old pharaohs will no longer chase you or pursue you.

c. Someday, we will all experience the complete and total victory that Jesus made inevitable.

C. But today, we anticipate the Coming of Jesus and His defeat of the final enemy.

1. The Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:20-26"

<sup>20</sup> But as it is, Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. <sup>21</sup> For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead also comes through a man. <sup>22</sup> For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.

<sup>23</sup> But each in his own order: Christ, the firstfruits; afterward, at his **coming**, those who belong to Christ. <sup>24</sup> Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, when he abolishes all rule and all authority and power. <sup>25</sup> For he must reign until he puts all his enemies under his feet. <sup>26</sup> The last enemy to be abolished is death.

2. This word for "coming" is the same word we learned about in our Thessalonian series.

3. It is *Parousia* and refers to Jesus' Second Coming.

4. It is the time when Jesus returns with all the Saints and He finishes off the Powers and Authorities we have been fighting against.

D. John saw a vision of this in Revelation 19:11-20:10

<sup>11</sup> Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse. Its rider is called Faithful and True, and with justice he judges and makes war. <sup>12</sup> His eyes were like a fiery flame, and many crowns were on his head. He had a name written that no one knows except himself. <sup>13</sup> He wore a robe dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God. <sup>14</sup> The armies that were in heaven followed him on white horses, wearing pure white linen. <sup>15</sup> A sharp sword came from his mouth, so that he might strike the nations with it. He will rule them with an iron rod. He will also trample the winepress of the fierce anger of God, the Almighty. <sup>16</sup> And he has a name written on his robe and on his thigh: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

#### **THE BEAST AND ITS ARMIES DEFEATED**

<sup>17</sup> Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he called out in a loud voice, saying to all the birds flying high overhead, "Come, gather together for the great supper of God, <sup>18</sup> so that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of military commanders, the flesh of the mighty, the flesh of horses and of their riders, and the flesh of everyone, both free and slave, small and great."

<sup>19</sup> Then I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and against his army. <sup>20</sup> But the beast was taken prisoner, and

along with it the false prophet, who had performed the signs in its presence. He deceived those who accepted the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image with these signs. Both of them were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. <sup>21</sup>The rest were killed with the sword that came from the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds ate their fill of their flesh.

#### **SATAN BOUND**

**20** Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven holding the key to the abyss and a great chain in his hand. <sup>2</sup>He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. <sup>3</sup>He threw him into the abyss, closed it, and put a seal on it so that he would no longer deceive the nations until the thousand years were completed. After that, he must be released for a short time.

#### **THE SAINTS REIGN WITH CHRIST**

<sup>4</sup>Then I saw thrones, and people seated on them who were given authority to judge. I also saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and who had not accepted the mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. <sup>5</sup>The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed.

This is the first resurrection. <sup>6</sup>Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

#### **SATANIC REBELLION CRUSHED**

<sup>7</sup>When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison <sup>8</sup>and will go out to deceive the nations at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle. Their number is like the sand of the sea. <sup>9</sup>They came up across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the encampment of the saints, the beloved city. Then fire came down from heaven and consumed them. <sup>10</sup>The devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet are, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

### 7. If the ultimate victory is in the future, what about now?

A. Some of us are feeling let down and disappointed.

1. We can't understand why it seems that God has led us into an impossible situation.
2. We feel trapped and surrounded and defenseless.

3. What Israel didn't yet realize, was that God had led them to this place of difficulty so that God's glory could be displayed again.

B. The Apostle Paul says this is happening for us too

2 Corinthians 4:7–18 (CSB)

<sup>7</sup>Now we have this treasure in clay jars, **so that this extraordinary power may be from God and not from us.** <sup>8</sup>We are afflicted in every way but not crushed; we are perplexed but not in despair; <sup>9</sup>we are persecuted but not abandoned; we are struck down but not destroyed. <sup>10</sup>We always carry the death of Jesus in our body, so that the life of Jesus may also be displayed in our body. <sup>11</sup>For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus's sake, so that Jesus's life may also be displayed in our mortal flesh. <sup>12</sup>So then, death is at work in us, but life in you. <sup>13</sup>And since we have the same spirit of faith in keeping with what is written, **I believed, therefore I spoke,** we also believe, and therefore speak. <sup>14</sup>For we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you. <sup>15</sup>Indeed, everything is for your benefit so that, as grace extends through more and more people, it may cause thanksgiving to increase to the glory of God.

<sup>16</sup>Therefore we do not give up. Even though our outer person is being destroyed, our inner person is being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup>*For our momentary light affliction is producing for us an absolutely incomparable eternal weight of glory.* <sup>18</sup>*So we do not focus on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.*

1. The enemy that afflicts cannot win.
2. The enemy that persecutes cannot win.
3. The enemy that kills us and destroys our body cannot win.
4. Because God is producing in us, through this momentary affliction, an incomparable weight of glory.

C. When God drowned the Egyptians in the water, God received the Glory.

1. When Egypt was finally defeated, Israel celebrated in Exodus 15 like no one had celebrated before.
2. From then on, Egypt poses no threat to God's people in Exodus.
3. The enemy that is challenging God cannot win.

D. In fact, God seems to be defeating Satan piece by piece.

1. Charles Spurgeon, in a sermon from 1866, wrote this.
2. When Satan shall have brought up every other adversary, and all these shall have been overcome through the blood of the Lamb, then the last, the body-guard of hell, under the command of the King of Terrors, the strongest, the fiercest, the most terrible of foes, shall assail us! It has been the custom of some great commanders to keep a body of picked men in reserve to make the final assault. Just when battalion after battalion have been swept away, and the main army reels; just when the victory is almost in the enemy's hands, the all but defeated commander pours his mightiest legions upon the foe, uncovers all his batteries and makes one terrible and final charge with the old guard that never has been beaten, and never can surrender, and then perhaps at the last moment he snatches triumph from between the foeman's teeth.<sup>1</sup>

Application: Satan is working up the fiercest battle.

A. As Pharaoh saw victory slipping away, he made one final charge.

1. The best of his chariots, the best of his warriors was sent to ensure Israel's defeat.
2. We know the result, but Pharaoh didn't.

B. I hope you can see the comparison here in the last days.

1. Satan is trying his best to defeat Jesus and His Church.

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<sup>1</sup> C. H. Spurgeon, "[The Last Enemy Destroyed](#)," in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 12 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1866), 642.

2. Here, in the last days, he will send his vilest and most powerful forces.

a. Whatever the Beast, Antichrist, and False-Prophet of Revelations represent, one thing is for sure:

b. They represent the last and best attack against God and His people.

3. But Jesus has already Won!!!

C. Death has no victory, and the grave has no sting.

1. Death has been swallowed up in victory! 1 Cor. 15

2. Romans 8:31: If God is for us, who can stand against us?

D. Today, I want to remind us to see the big picture.

1. The Big Picture of God's ultimate victory.

2. Before we can know how to handle a pursuing enemy, we need to know that God wins.

3. Today, I want to remind you that God wins!

a. We have a part to play, but God wins.

b. The same God who can deliver Israel from certain defeat is the same One who will deliver us also.