

C.R. 6-11-17

God's Presence in Trials

Text: Exodus 14:19-20

Intro: We have covered a lot of ground through this series, although the Israelites have not taken the first step into the Red Sea. Let's quickly restate the rules that we have covered thus far: (1) God intends for you to be where you are, (2) Be more concerned for God's glory than for your relief, (3) Acknowledge your enemy, but keep your eyes on the Lord, (4) Pray, (5) Stay Calm and confident, and give God time to work, and (6) When unsure, just take the next logical step by faith. Today we will look at Red Sea Rule number 7. We will highlight three truths concerning God and His involvement in trials.

First, let us note His Person

I. His Person (Vs. 19—Angel of God)

- a. In Chapter 13 we found out that it was God that was leading them (LORD—Jehovah)
- b. The Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them.” Who is this angel of God accompanying the Israelites in Exodus 14? The previous chapter told us, “The LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud . . . and by night in a pillar of fire” (Ex. 13: 21). The prophet Isaiah later explained that the “Angel of His Presence” saved the Israelites (Isa. 63: 9). The pillar of fire and cloud, in theological language, was a theophany or a Christophany, a singular Old Testament appearance of God Himself, specifically of God the Son, second person of the Trinity, who manifests the Father's presence (John 1: 18). In other words, the Lord Himself ushered the Israelites through the Red Sea: “The Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them . . . So, it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus, it was a cloud and darkness to the one, and it gave light by night to the other, so that the one did not come near the other all that night” (Ex. 14: 19– 20).
- c. The only hope that the Nation of Israel had was God Himself
- d. God did not send some robust angel to handle this situation, He sent His Son!!
- e. Quote: Karl Barth, famed theologian, was once asked, “What is the greatest thought you ever had?” His answer: “Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.”
- f. Just as God met the need of the nation of Israel by sending His Son, He has met our greatest need in the same fashion—The Cross!!

Secondly, let us note His Position

II. His Position (Vs. 19, 20—From before to behind)

- a. Scripture tells us that the Angel of the Lord, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them
- b. For His children, He serves as both Guard and Guide. He both precedes us and protects us. He is simultaneously our Shepherd and Shield. He is Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the One who goes before, guiding into the future, and the One who goes behind, gathering up our debris, our failures, and our poor attempts at ministry, blessing us and leaving a blessing behind us for others. Consider what the psalmist declared, Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. 6Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. (Ps. 139: 5, 6)
- c. God takes care of His children

- d. He leads, guides, and PROTECTS
- e. God had already told the Israelites to move forward, they could see for themselves what was in front of them, what they did not need to see was the fast approaching enemy. How many times has God averted our eyes from the evil that Satan desires to cast upon us. Daniel, when he desperately needed divine assistance, the Bible tells us that God's messenger was delayed for 21 days by the enemy. Daniel could not see this unfolding, and thank God, we cannot see into the spiritual realm, because if we could it would cause us to run and hide.
- f. God has our front, our side, and our back!!!
- g. The only place on the body that is not protected by the armor of God recorded in [Ephesians 6:10-17](#) is that of our backs. That is because God takes care of His children.

Finally, we note His Presence

III. His Presence (Vs. 19, 20—shed light on the Israelites)

- a. As the cloud moved behind them, the cloud provided light to the Israelites.
- b. **Quote:** "A tradition current in the west of Scotland tells that when one of the Covenanting preachers and his little band of hearers had been surprised on a hill-side by the military, the minister cried out, "Lord, throw Thy mantle over us, and protect us." And immediately out of the clear sky there fell a mist, which sundered and protected the pursued from the pursuers. And a Netherland tradition tells how a little army of Protestants was once saved from the king of Spain's troops by the flashing lights and noise as of an army sent by the Lord to throw confusion into the camp of the enemy. The teacher will recollect the story of the Christian woman, who calmly awaiting in her home the approach of the enemy, was, in answer to her prayer, saved from them by a circling wall of snow. The dividing pillar is a reality yet." S. S. Times
- c. It illuminated their camp and kept them from wandering into harm's way (Egyptians camp)
- d. God's Word does the same for us today, it illuminates for us the way of salvation
- e. When we walk through trials, the greatest assurance we have is to know that He abides with us.
- f. We do not need a cloud in front of us because we have Jesus living inside of us!!
- g. [Philippians 4:5-6](#)—Let your moderation be known unto all men. The LORD is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. [Isaiah 41:10](#)—Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. [Genesis 28:15](#)—And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. [Acts 18:9-10](#)—One night the LORD spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city. [Hebrews 13:5](#)—Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.
- h. The other day I was visiting a new Christian who told me he was studying his Bible, praying each day, and sharing his faith with others. But he was having one problem. Every so often, a noxious word would fly from his mouth like a sudden burp. "Well," I said, "give me an example. Go ahead and curse right now." "Oh, no," he said with embarrassment. "I can't do that." "Sure you can," I replied. "Let 'er fly." "No!" When I asked why, he replied, "You're my pastor. I can't cuss in front of you." "Well," I said, "if you're ashamed to cuss in my presence, why aren't you ashamed to do it in the Lord's presence? He's always with you." The young man got my point. The reality of God's presence both comforts our hearts and restrains our behavior.

RED SEA RULE # 7—Envision God's Enveloping Presence