

When There is No Way Out of Impossible Situations

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Scripture: Exodus 14:12-31 (NIV)

You can read the full Scripture reading after this message, but for now, here are some selected verses.

¹² “Didn't we say to you in Egypt, ‘Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians’? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!’

¹³ Moses answered the people, ‘Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again.

¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.’

¹⁵ Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on.’

³¹ And when the Israelites saw the mighty hand of the LORD displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant.”

Introduction

The Israelites were between a rock and a hard place. Just for one moment, stand in Israel's shoes. Close your eyes for a short moment. How would you feel? What would you see? What would you smell? What would you hear? What would you taste?

I want to ask you, what are the impossible situations that you are facing today?

I want to tell you that you don't have to panic!

I want to tell you that you don't have to give up!

Don't face your problems ostrich style with your head in the sand because you can look up to God.

There is hope and there is an outcome. Hold on!

How Big?

This was a massive undertaking. We learn from Exodus 12:37-38 that there were about 600,000 men, excluding children. It is estimated that over 2 million (very conservative estimation) people needed to cross the Red Sea. It would also seem that the crossing lasted for about 6 to 8 hours (one night). We are talking about a line somewhere between 20km long if they walked through 100 people abreast or about 40km if they walked 50 people abreast. This is not a small gap in the sea with a short line of people!

The Impossible Situation

On the back of the Israelites are their enemies marching and travelling in chariots to take them. Josephus makes the whole number of Egypt's army to be 50,000 horse, and 200,000 foot. The chariots could have about 20 000. Remember, that's behind them, and they are not coming with an invitation for tea and cucumber sandwiches. They are coming to forcefully capture them and take them back into slavery.

On their left and right are a tower of rocks and desert on their way to the sea. Do you realize that God leads them into this geographical place? Ex. 14:3 says, "Pharaoh will think, 'The Israelites are wandering around the land in confusion, hemmed in by the desert.'"

And in front of them is the Red Sea.

They are literally surrounded by big problems and they have little time to think and find the solution for their escape. The Egyptians are coming – what to do?

What to Do Next?

Basically, the Israelites have four options.

1. Lift the surrender banner – a white flag – before the enemy could kill or forcibly capture any of them.
2. Take a chance by quickly mobilizing the people to resist and fight the enemy.
3. Delay capture by hiding on the rocks, running into the desert or take a long swim.

Remember that I said that the Israelites were led into their current geographic position by God? And God foreknew what Pharaoh would do?

4. Find safety and protection in the will of God. Let's recap:
 - The will of God is what they were doing.
 - The chosen place of God was their positioning.
 - God is intimately concerned with His people's physical, emotional and spiritual well-being.

How to Face the Impossible

So, although you are safe, how do you get out of an impossible situation? To the complaint of the people when they saw no way out, Moses answers in Exodus 14:13 Moses answered, *“Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again.”*

Then Moses says something else in Exodus 14:14, and it's quite amazing. Exodus 14:14, *“The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.”* I can imagine that to a very afraid Israelite, this would be an unusual thing to do. Only be still. You see, in God gave His people a threefold solution to an impossible situation and it is VERY different from a human solution.

1. Don't be afraid. They don't have to surrender.
2. Stand still. They do not have to fight back.
3. See the salvation of the Lord. There is no need to hide.

It is not an easy thing to “hold your peace” in the face of danger. It seems impractical to do nothing in a time of distress or to expect that something good is going to happen when all that you can see are darkness everywhere. But Exodus 14;14 is clear: God Himself will do the fighting ... He has got this!

This reality highlights the meeting point of human-ness and a Godly intervention in impossible circumstances.

How to Move Forward

To enjoy the leading and protection of God in life, you have to be in right standing with God and be, live and move in His will.

From this point onward, *you have to make peace with what God has in store, including the results – which will sometime be very difficult for us but always to His glory.*

When you are up against the impossible, know that the reason it's impossible because human vision, ability and resources are useless. You need God. So:

1. Pray. You cannot overcome unless you prayerfully bring the problem to God. Israel's outcome was born in communication with God. God is never silent when we call out to Him, the communication breakdown is always on our side. Try being silent before God (Habakkuk 2:20).
2. Trust. Confess your faith – and trust God. Placing everything in His power goes before standing still and holding your peace. If you do not trust God, then you face one of Israel's "natural choices" (1) Surrender to the enemy, (2) fight the enemy or (3) hide from the enemy.
3. Praise and worship. First, immerse yourself in praise and worship so that you can visualize the salvation of the Lord. Praise and worship Him in advance for His deliverance.

Your difficult spot does not change who God is. But by praising Him you learn to look up in faith instead of around in worry.

Conclusion

When an impossible situation struck the people of God, Moses revealed very specific things to do; things that don't necessarily make human sense.

- Don't be afraid. Don't panic. Turn instead to God.
- Stand still. Trust God.
- Praise and Worship Him.
- See the salvation of the Lord.
- Live in the will of God, the place of God and in relationship with God.

Amen.