

October 8th, 2023

The Crushing of the Dragon in the Midst of the Sea

Exodus 14:15-31

The Red Sea in Scripture

Next to creation, the Crossing of the Red Sea is bar-none the greatest miracle in the OT. It was this event that God continued to remind Israel of throughout the OT canon. 40 years after this, He tells them in Joshua 24:7 “[I] put darkness between you and the Egyptians and made the sea come upon them and cover them; and your eyes saw what I did in Egypt...” (Joshua 24:6-7). 800 years later Isaiah said to the LORD in Isaiah 51:10 “Was it not you who dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep, who made the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to pass over?” 1000 years later, Nehemiah prays “And you saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt and heard their cry at the Red Sea...And you made a name for yourself, as it is to this day. ¹¹ And you divided the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on dry land, and you cast their pursuers into the depths, as a stone into mighty waters” (Nehemiah 9:9-11). It was this event that became a permanent part of Israel’s songbook (cf. Psalm 74:13; 78:13; 106:9; 114:3).¹

¹ 1500 years later, the Apostle Paul connects the Red Sea to baptism and the gospel. “For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ² and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea” (1 Corinthians 10:1-2) “Suffice it to say, that if Dante were asked what has today become a controversial question in academic circles—namely whether there is a center of biblical theology, and, if so, what is it—he would answer: “Yes, the central theme and story of the Bible, and of history itself, is the exodus.” Put differently, literary critic Northrop Frye once remarked that the exodus “is the only thing that ever happens” in the Bible, with the New Testament revolving around Christ’s resurrection, the antitype of the exodus.” L. Michael Morales, *Exodus Old and New: A Biblical Theology of Redemption*, (Downers Grove, IL.: IVP Academic, 2020), pg. 4

The gospel foreshadowed

Why is this event so foundational to Scripture? Because it is the gospel foreshadowed.

Just as a deliverer was born for God's people in Egypt, namely Moses. So a Deliverer was born in spiritual Egypt, namely Christ.

Just as Pharaoh persecuted Israel of old. So the seed of the serpent continues to persecute True Israel-God's elect.

Just as Moses spread his arms to heaven and tore the Red Sea in two. So Christ spread his arms on a Roman cross, and tore the curtain veil in two.

Israel was baptized in the sea and was saved (1 Corinthians 10:2)

We are baptized by the blood of Christ *as it were* and are saved (Revelation 1:5)

The Red Sea is about the salvation of all of God's people. It is the gospel foreshadowed.

★ Salvation Is the Glorifying of God

★ Salvation Is the Re-creation of Man

★ Salvation Is the Crushing of the Dragon

I. Salvation Is the Glorifying of God

Addressing the mediator

Recall that last time we saw that Israel was in an impossible situation, trapped between a demon, a castle and the sea. And now Pharaoh and his army are blocking their only exit. They cry out against the LORD for ever leading them out of Egypt (v.11-12) Then Moses tells them in v.14 “The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.” Picking up in v.15 “The LORD said to Moses, “Why do you cry to me?” Now we don’t see Moses crying out to God. Probably God is addressing Israel’s sinful cry through Moses since Moses is the mediator of the covenant.² In essence, God is saying: ‘the time for your crying is over, salvation is now at hand.’ Halfway through v.15 “Tell the people of Israel to *go forward*.” The Hebrew word means *to pull out your tent-stakes, break camp*. God is saying it’s time to go.

The cleaving of the waters

Then He tells Moses in v.16 “Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and *divide it*,” The Hebrew word means to cleave, or break open. The Red Sea was to be cloven, broken in half³ Not meaning that this bit goes this way, and that bit goes that way. No. They were to become two vertical

² Currid says here that “The proper solution is to understand that Moses is being addressed by God as the mediator of the covenant, the representative of the people.” John D. Currid, *Exodus Vol. 1: Chapters 1-18*, (Auburn, MA.: Evangelical Press, 2000), pg. 398. Alternatively Calvin presumes Moses did pray to God and so God is not addressing Israel’s sinful cry but Moses’ pious prayer. The sense is according to Calvin: “Weary not yourself by crying any more; the event will prove that you are heard” John Calvin, *Calvin’s Commentaries Vol. II.*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: BakerBooks, 2009), pg. 247. He argues that Moses had already been informed by God that He would save His people to the uttermost, and so his confidence in v.14 was not misplaced.

³ Just as the deep waters were broken up by God causing the world-wide deluge (Genesis 7:11) so the waters at the Red Sea were broken or cloven in half. Just as Noah was saved through the broken waters on the Ark, and Israel was saved through broken waters of the Red Sea.

walls of sea water as tall as modern skyscrapers all the way to the other side. The 10 plagues were merely the warm-up band, this was the main event. 2.5 million Israelites were going to pass through the sea, not on boats, but on dry ground (end of v.16). As one commentator put it “The term for ‘dry ground’ refers to something which is ‘dry, withered, without moisture, drained.’”⁴ They weren’t even going to get mud on their feet.

The madness of judicial hardening

Children, boys and girls, if you were Pharaoh, would you think that following Israel into the sea was a good idea? God had already destroyed Egypt with ten plagues. Pharaoh’s own son—his heir to the throne—was dead. Does it seem like a good idea to follow them? No. Then why did they? Look at v.17 “And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians *so that they shall go in after them.*” Stop. They pursued Israel into a tunnel of death whom Yahweh their enemy was upholding with His power, *because God hardened their hearts to do so.* Dear congregation—this is judicial hardening—God was judging them. What does judicial hardening look like? Insanity. Go read Romans 1 with your children. Show them how when a people refuses to honor and give thanks to God, God hands them over to a reprobate mind. The result is clown world—a world that does the most stupid things imaginable, things that accelerate their own destruction. That’s what’s happening here. God hardened their hearts in

⁴ Curid, pg. 298

judgment because although they had all the evidence in the world that Yahweh was the one true and living God, they refused to worship Him.⁵

“So that My Name may be proclaimed in all the earth”

But if God will not be honored by them willingly, He will extort it from them in their death. Halfway through v.17 “...and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen.” Here we see what type of glory God has in view—the glory of human acknowledgement. v.18 “And the Egyptians *shall know that I am the LORD*, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.”⁶

- Certainly before their death Pharaoh and his men came to the terrifying knowledge that Yahweh is the one true and Living God.⁷ They saw His glory and then they perished.
- Certainly the nearby inhabitants of Migdol and Baal-zephon saw the glory of Yahweh as their king and entire army were enclosed in a tomb of sea water.⁸

⁵ Furthermore the hardness of heart for the Egyptians was doubly foreboding. When God hardened their hearts, their hearts became כָּבֵד *kābēd* (Exodus 7:14) heavy. As Pharaoh and all the Egyptians perished, their hearts were made heavy. John Currid writes that the “Egyptians believed that after death, a person would face judgment in the underworld. The heart of the deceased...would be weighed on the scales of truth. On one side of the scale was the heart and on the other was the feather of truth and righteousness. If the heart weighed heavy with misdeeds, the person was deemed unjust and unrighteous and would be banned [from] the Egyptian afterlife.” *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament: The Gospel Promised*, Ed. Miles V. Van Pelt, (Wheaton, IL.: Crossway, 2016), pg. 82

⁶ This is the most important thing to know about the Red Sea event. God did it for His glory. Nehemiah 9:10 “And You made a name for yourself [when] you divided the sea before them.” Isaiah 63:12 God “divided the waters before them to make for himself an everlasting name.” Jeremiah 32:20 “You have shown signs and wonders in the land of Egypt...and have made a name for yourself.” Daniel 9:15 “O Lord our God, who brought your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and have made a name for yourself.”

⁷ God supernaturally threw them into panic (v.24), their wheels became clogged (v.25)—and they concluded from this that Yahweh was fighting for Israel, and they started to retreat.

⁸ v.24 indicates the morning had come and so their destruction was in broad daylight

- Certainly Israel saw the glory of Yahweh as the dead corpses of the Egyptians lay upon the seashore.

Israel's liberation not God's main goal

Dear congregation, this was God's one all-consuming aim at the Red Sea. The liberation of Israel was *not* God's main goal. If the liberation of Israel was God's main goal, then ask yourself: why didn't He kill Pharaoh and free Israel in chapter 1?⁹ If God's main goal was Israel's liberation, why did He harden Pharaoh's heart causing Israel to be enslaved longer? Why did He lead Israel into a trap at the Red Sea? The answer is that Israel's liberation was not God's main goal. God's main goal is that all men would know that there is no one like God in all the earth. Romans 9:17 "For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, *and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.*"

1st Principle: Saved to see the glory of God

That brings us to our **first principle**: *The main benefit of our salvation is that we get to see the glory of God.* Everything that God did in Exodus was to make His glory conspicuous. Each plague revealed something more about Him. Every delay gave new opportunity to display His superiority. Each trap uncovered His supremacy. The Red Sea is yet another place where God is saying "Look at Me, esteem Me, admire Me, applaud Me, celebrate Me."

⁹ It's like the bad guy in the stories we read—we want to say "just die already." In the Exodus, we are forced to ask: God why don't you just kill Pharaoh already?

Elenctic Use

And this immediately raises the objection: *God sounds like an egotist.* C.S. Lewis said when he was an unbeliever, this was a most off-putting thing about God. He said it was a “...miserable idea that God should in any sense need, or crave for our worship.”¹⁰ He said it was like a “vain woman wanting compliments.”¹¹ How do we answer that? Well first we say that human egotists are indeed a pathetic sight. They are pathetic because they think their ‘greatness’ comes from themselves. But what does Paul say? “What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?” That’s why when one becomes a Christian, one of the first things they learn is to praise God when complimented. ‘Man Johnny that was really great what you did!’ ‘Thank you,’ Johnny says and ‘praise the Lord.’ But ask yourself, what should God say when He is complimented? ‘Wow God that was amazing what you did.’ Should He deflect? “Oh no don’t say that about Me, I’m undeserving.” No, He receives our praise *precisely* because He is deserving of it. Revelation 4:11 “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power.”

Celebratory Use

But there’s something else. This was Lewis’ discovery when he became a Christian. He said “I did not see that it is in the process of being worshipped that *God communicates His presence to men*...Even in Judaism the essence of the sacrifice was not really that men gave bulls and goats to God, but that by their so doing *God gave Himself to men.*”¹² This is the essence of the gospel: *God gives Himself to*

¹⁰ C.S. Lewis, *The Beloved Works of C.S. Lewis*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Family Christian Press), pg. 178

¹¹ *Ibid*

¹² *Ibid*

men. Romans 8:32 God “...did not spare his own Son *but gave him up for us all...*” Think about what is happening in this service right now as we ‘worship’ the LORD. Who is real beneficiary of this service? What is the LORD doing as we praise Him, acknowledge Him, esteem Him? *He’s giving Himself to us*—He’s sharing His love with us, His grace with us, His glory with us. He invites us to praise Him *so that* we could feast of the abundance of *His house* and drink from the rivers of *His delight*. Don’t you see? God’s main goal in sending Jesus Christ into the world *was not* simply so that you could have eternal life. Satan has eternal life. Pharaoh has eternal life. Eternal life is no life at all if we don’t get to see the glory of God. That’s called hell. God’s main goal in sending Jesus was so that we could see His glory. John 17:24 “Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, *to see my glory* that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.”¹³ That’s our **first principle**: *The main benefit of our salvation is that we get to see the glory of God.*

II. Salvation Is the Re-creation of Man

The Angel of God

So let’s return to the narrative. Imagine the scene. Israel is pulling up their tent pegs and Pharaoh’s is just about to trample them as their backs are up against the sea. Look at v.19-20 “Then the angel of God who was going before the host of Israel *moved and went behind them*, and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, ²⁰ *coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel*. And there was the cloud and the darkness. And it lit up the night

¹³ Seeing God’s glory is our everlasting reward. Revelation 21:23 “And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, *for the glory of God gives it light*, and its lamp is the Lamb.”

without one coming near the other all night.” This was not an ordinary angel who stopped Pharaoh’s army from harming Israel. It was the Son of God Himself. In v.24 He’s identified as Yahweh. Who is the angel (or messenger) of Yahweh? God’s own Son. The lesson here is here is that Christ Himself stands between us and the seed of the serpent. Satan can never reclaim one of the saints that Christ has redeemed. 2 Thessalonians 3:3 “But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one.”¹⁴ John 10:27-28 “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.”

Christ pulled an all-nighter

Look at v.21 “Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.” The cleaving of the Red Sea was quickly accomplished. But the traveling of 2.5 million + Israelites on dry ground took all night. The LORD walled up the sea nearly instantly through the *means* of a strong east wind¹⁵ *and then* sustained the miracle all night long so that the 2.5 million+ Israelites could walk through it.¹⁶

¹⁴ cf. 2 Timothy 4:18; 2 Peter 2:9; Jude 1:25

¹⁵ WCF 5.3 “God, in his ordinary providence, maketh use of means, yet is free to work without, above, and against them, at his pleasure.”

¹⁶ “Donald Bridge tells the story of 'an American congregation which included some negroes accustomed to answering the preacher as he went along. On one occasion they were addressed by someone with "liberal" leanings, tending to dismiss the miracles of the Bible. He referred in his sermon to the Israelites crossing the Red Sea. "Praise de Lord," shouted a negro. "Takin' all dem children through de deep waters. What a mighty miracle!" The preacher frowned. "It was not a miracle," he explained condescendingly. "They were doubtless in marsh-land, the tide was ebbing, and the children of Israel picked their way across in six inches of water." "Praise de Lord!", shouted the negro un-abashed. "Drownin' all dem Egyptians in six inches of water. What a mighty miracle!" Currid, pg. 307

The Red Sea & re-creation

But what is crucial to see here is the language of creation. Notice carefully the language: *the LORD...made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.* Keep your finger here, but turn to Genesis 1:9. This is the third day of creation. What does God say? “And God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so.” In creation God gathered up the waters and made dry land appear. At the Red Sea, God gathered up the waters and made dry land appear. What does this mean? It means that Israel was being re-created in this event.¹⁷ When God delivered Israel from Egypt, it is God as it were re-creating the world in Israel.

The Red-Sea & de-creation

We’ve already seen how God’s judgment on Egypt was His de-creating Egypt.¹⁸ Each plague Egypt reversed part of God’s creation. God made all vegetation in creation and then destroyed it with the plagues of hail and locusts. God made the sea creatures in creation and then destroyed the fish and the

¹⁷ Biblical Theologians have long said that Israel’s salvation from Egypt is a re-enactment of Creation. The parallels between the Exodus and the Genesis account is unmistakable.

- At the end of Exodus 13 God’s glory cloud “fluttered” over Israel Deuteronomy 32:10-12 just as the Spirit of God “hovered” over the earth Genesis 1:2 - same Hebrew Word. See David Chilton, *Paradise Restored: A Biblical Theology of Dominion*, (Horn Lake, MS.: Dominion Press, 2007), pg. 57
- In Exodus 14 God would save their lives by dividing the waters of the Red Sea Exodus 14 just as God brought all life out of the chaotic waters of Genesis 1:2. See Morales pg. 49.
- In Exodus 19 Moses would lead Israel to Mt. Sinai to meet with God just as God met with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden which was a Mountain (Ezekiel 28:13-14), from which the rivers watered the earth (Genesis 2:10-14).
- In Exodus 35ff the tabernacle was built where God’s Shekinah glory resided with the people of God, just as God and His glory dwelt with Adam and Eve in garden of paradise.

¹⁸ Ryken says here: “The God who made the waters [Gen. 1:3] turned the Nile into blood [Ex. 7:20]. The God who made green things grow [Gen. 1:11] destroyed vegetation with hail and locusts [Ex. 9:25 & 10:15]. The God who made creatures swim in the sea and swarm on dry land [Gen. 1:21] brought death to fish and frogs [Ex. 7:21 & 8:13]. The God who made men [Gen. 1:27] and beasts [Gen. 1:25] sent them disease [Ex. 9:6] and even death [Ex. 9:25]. Finally, the God who brought light out of darkness [Gen. 1:3-4] made the light fade to black [Ex. 10:21].” Philip Graham Ryken, *Preaching the Word: Exodus, Saved for God’s Glory*, (Wheaton, IL.: Crossway, 2015), pg. 279

frogs in Egypt. God made man in creation and then took away man's life in the tenth plague, etc. Every judgment was de-creation. Especially here, as the Egyptians perish in the dark sea their de-creation is complete. Recall what did God first say about the world He created? Genesis 1:2 "The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters." Pharaoh and his army were now without form and void, in the darkness of the waters. God completely de-created Egypt. Judgement is de-creation.

Israel's re-creation¹⁹

But redemption is re-creation. Israel is coming out of those waters.²⁰ In fact every part of this event whispers new creation. Listen to how Warren Gage puts it: "the redemptive creation of Israel at the sea is cast in the same narrative style of original creation as the pillar of divine presence brings *light into darkness* (cf. *the first creative day*), the waters are divided (cf. *the second creative day*), and the dry land emerges (cf. *the third creative day*)."²¹ John Currid adds "The biblical narrative teaches that the dividing of the Red Sea--and the entire exodus event,

¹⁹ See David Chilton and Puritan John Owen's take on how the Red Sea event was God establishing new creation—a new heavens and a new earth on their commentary on Isaiah 51:15-16 in David Chilton, *The Days of Vengeance: An Exposition of the Book of Revelation*, (Tyler, TX.: Dominion Press, 2011), pg. 540ff

²⁰ The sea in Scripture is often associated with death and chaos. In Isaiah 57:20 the wicked are said to like the sea. In Daniel 7:3, the ancient wicked nations were described as monsters who came out of the sea. In Job 41:1, the terrifying Leviathan is said to live in the sea. In Isaiah 27:1, salvation is described as the Lord unsheathing His sword and saying the dragon that is in the sea. In Matthew 8:31-32, Jesus cast out the demons who entered a heard of pigs and rushed headlong to be drown in the sea. In Revelation 13:1, the beast who attacked the early church and wicked Jerusalem was said to come out of the sea. In Revelation 21:1, the New Heavens and Earth will be paradise because the death and chaos of the sea will be no more So the sea typologically in Scripture is a place of death and chaos. A place of sin. A place where the dragon lives. In passing through the sea, Israel passed through death into life. They were putting their Egyptian life to death, and coming to life as God's people.

²¹ *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament*, pg. 78.

for that matter--is a second creation...the creation of Israel as God's covenant people."

Israel's baptism

v.22 further demonstrates this. "And the people of Israel *went into the midst of the sea...*" Stop. What does Paul call this event? Israel's baptism! 1 Corinthians 10:1-2. "For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ²*and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.*" Passing through the sea—from death to life—was Israel's national baptism. And this baptism came with a new name. They were baptized *into Moses*. They were shedding off their citizenship as Egyptians forever, and were named under Moses who was the human mediator of the Old Covenant. This crossing of the Sea was baptism—a re-creating a re-naming—of God's people.

2nd Principle: Salvation is re-creation

That brings us to our **second principle**: *The second benefit of our salvation is that we are re-created in Christ Jesus.* Ephesians 2:10 "For we are his workmanship, *created in Christ Jesus...*" 2 Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, *he is a new creation.* The old has passed away; behold, *the new has come.*"²² Everywhere in Scripture this is taught. Salvation is *re-creation*. We are given *re-birth* (John 3:3). We are *re-generated* and *re-newed* (Titus 3:5). We are given *new hearts* (Ezekiel 36:26); made *new men* (Ephesians 4:24); given a *newness of life* (Romans 6:4); at baptism we are given a *new name* (Matthew 28:19).²³

²² cf. Galatians 6:15

²³ see Chilton, pg. 49

Informatory Use

Consider what this meant for Israel. What did it mean for Israel to be re-created? It meant their old life was put to death.

- Pharaoh was no longer their master and king. Yahweh was.
- Formerly they were not a people, but now they were God's holy nation.
- The laws of the Egyptians no longer governed their lives. The covenant did.
- They were no longer slaves. They were a kingdom of priests.
- They no longer lived in house of bondage but in the house of the LORD.
- They once served in temples of demons, now in the tabernacle of God.
- They once had no inheritance, now they would settle in the Promised Land.

Everything changed once they crossed the Red Sea. They were re-created.

Experimental Use

Dear Christian, don't you know that when God made you a Christian, you crossed the Red Sea. You passed from the land of death, into a whole new life? God has re-created you and it is a far greater work than your original creation.

In first creation, all of Adam's sin and guilt was imputed to you because Adam was your federal head and when he fell you fell with him (1 Corinthians 15:22).

- But in the new creation, when you crossed that Red Sea of Christ's blood, all your sin and guilt was washed away. Christ is now your federal head and all his righteousness has been imputed to you by free grace. Just as Israel was baptized in the sea, you were baptized by the Holy Spirit. Just as Israel passed out of the land of death into life, so you will not come into judgment but have passed from death to life (John 5:24).

In first creation, we were storing up wrath for ourselves on the day of wrath (Romans 2:5)

- But in the new creation, when we crossed that Red Sea of Christ's blood, all that wrath was propitiated. 1 John 4:10 "In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

In first creation, we were sons of disobedience (Ephesians 2:2).

- But in the new creation, when we crossed that Red Sea of Christ's blood, we became redeemed children of God. Romans 8:15 "...you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!'"

In the first creation we were separated from Christ—strangers to the covenant of promise.

- But in the new creation, we who were once far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ—that heavenly Red Sea. Christ is your now your brother, God our Father, and the Holy Spirit our eternal Comforter.

Dear congregation, when we crossed that Red Sea of Christ's blood, we became a new creation. That's our **second principle**: *The second benefit of our salvation is that we are re-created in Christ Jesus.*

II. Salvation Is the Crushing of the Dragon

Springing the trap

Now apparently Christ in the fire cloud moved so that the Egyptian army could enter the sea. Look at v.23 “The Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.” Egypt’s bloody pursuit of Israel here was not a sign of evil winning but of evil getting crushed. Don’t misinterpret Providence loved ones, when it looks like evil is gaining the upper hand, God is about to spring the trap.

The LORD’s watch

Look at v.24 “And in the morning watch...” Stop, the Hebrew here refers to the last military watch that soldiers take part in over the course of the night to prevent a surprise attack.²⁴ But it’s not Israel that is on watch duty, it is LORD himself. “And in the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw the Egyptian forces into a panic,²⁵ clogging their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily.” Stop. The NIV says “He jammed the wheels of their chariots so that they had difficulty driving.” The Israelites walked easily on dry ground, but the Egyptians—whether due to mud from water starting to break from the walls or some other means—couldn’t drive their chariots. The Egyptians immediately interpreted it as supernatural. Halfway through v. 25 “And the Egyptians said, “Let us flee from before Israel,

²⁴ There is the first watch Lamentations 2:19; the middle watch Judges 7:19; the third watch or the morning watch is what we see here Exodus 14:24 (also cf. 1 Samuel 11:11). When Israel left, Moses said “the LORD brought the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt *by their hosts*” (Exodus 12:51). And they were “equipped for battle” (Exodus 12:18). Now He employs this language of a “morning watch.” Clearly He wants us to think of Israel in military terms—the army of the LORD—the church militant.

for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians.”” God fulfilled what He said in v.18, the Egyptians knew this was the doing of the LORD.

Death by water

v.26 “Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.”” This is the second time in history that the serpent’s seed would die by drowning. His seed suffered this same death in the flood in Genesis 7:21-23.²⁵

Not one of them remained

v.27 “So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal course *when the morning appeared*²⁶ [so that the surrounding cities could see what happened]. And as the Egyptians fled into it [that is they tried to escape²⁷], the LORD *threw*²⁸ the Egyptians into the midst of the sea. ²⁸ The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen; of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained.” Children, boys and girls maybe you’ve seen that movie “The Prince of Egypt.” It showed that Pharaoh survived washed up on the shore on the other side. That’s not true. Pharaoh

²⁵ In this respect, the crossing of the Red Sea was a recapitulation of the Flood account. Consequently, on the last day the sea will give up her dead in order to be judged (Revelation 20:13).

²⁶ Salvation happening in the morning is a frequent theme in Scripture. Lot was saved in the morning - Genesis 19:15. Abraham went out in the morning to sacrifice Isaac - Genesis 22:3. Judah found 185,000 Assyrians dead in the morning by Yahweh - 2 Kings 19:25. God is said to deliver the Church in the morning - Psalm 46:5; 130:6. Christ rose from the dead early in the morning - Matthew 28:1-6

²⁷ The KJV says they “fled against it”; the NLT says they “tried to escape”; the BSB they “were retreating” They tried to get away, to flee, to retreat, to run for their lives.

²⁸ נָעַר nā‘ar the word means to shake off. Pharaoh and his men were on God’s dry land, and God simply shook them like a man would shake a dirty rug outside emptying it’s contents in the wind. So Pharaoh and his men were shaken off, or swept away into the midst of the sea.

perished in the sea. v.28 says “not *one* of them remained.” Psalm 136:15 says that God “overthrew *Pharaoh* and his host in the Red Sea.” It happened just as God told them in v.13 “...the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again.” Israel walked through on dry ground (v.29), and v.30 says “Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from *the hand of the Egyptians*²⁹, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore.” Free at last, free at last. Thank God almighty, Israel was free at last.

The deeper magic

But there is a deeper magic. Remember that Scripture calls Pharaoh the dragon (Ezekiel 29:3; 32:2). In doing so, Pharaoh is identified with Satan who is called the Dragon in Revelation 12:9. When Pharaoh perished, the Scripture tells us that God was crushing the head of the dragon.

Psalm 74:13 Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou [crushed] the heads of the dragons in the waters.”³⁰

Isaiah 51:9-10 “Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in days of old, the generations of long ago. Was it not you who cut Rahab [*Rahab*

²⁹ Certainly this is a mocking of Pharaoh and all of Egypt. In Egyptian history, Pharaoh’s hand was said to be mighty. James Hoffmeier author of the book “The Arm of God versus the Arm of Pharaoh in the Exodus Narratives” wrote that ancient Egyptian texts described Pharaoh’s power in terms of “Pharaoh’s strong hand”; that he possessed a “strong arm”; he was the one who destroyed “enemies with his arm.” *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament*, pg. 7- Here we see that Pharaoh’s strong hand is defeated by the LORD’s strong hand. The next verse says that “Israel saw the great *power* that the Lord used against the Egyptians.” The Hebrew word for power can be translated as hand. In fact the NIV translates v.31 by saying “...the Israelites saw the mighty hand of the LORD displayed against the Egyptians.” Pharaoh’s strong hand is utterly defeated by Yahweh’s mighty hand. The last god of Egypt is humiliated and defeated by the God of Israel, the one true and living God. Israel saw all of this. And now that pathetic Egyptian god was now lying dead along with all the king’s horses and all the king’s men upon the seashore.

³⁰ KJV

was the symbolic name of Egypt] in pieces, *who pierced the dragon?*¹⁰ Was it not you who dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep, who made the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to pass over?”

Why would Scripture identify the death of Pharaoh with the crushing and piercing of the Dragon? It's pointing to first promise of the gospel in Genesis 3:15: *that the seed of the Woman—Christ—would crush the serpent's head.* The death of Pharaoh is a type/a foreshadowing of the final destruction of the seed of the serpent.³¹

3rd Principle: Salvation includes the crushing of the dragon

That brings us to our **last principle**: *the third benefit of our salvation is that the dragon and all his seed are crushed.* This progressive defeating of the dragon is what has been happening in all history since the fall. The dragon's seed perished at the flood (Genesis 7:21-23); here at Red Sea in the person of Pharaoh (Exodus 14:28); in the kingdoms of Babylon, Media/Persia, Greece, and Rome (Daniel 2:31-35); etc. Human history is the progress of the kingdom of the risen Christ growing and the seed of the Dragon perishing. Pharaoh was thrown into a sea of water here, but there is a Day coming when Great Dragon and all his seed will be thrown into a the lake of fire. Never to rise again. Never to enslave or abuse the people of God ever again. Revelation 20:10 “and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”

³¹ Isaiah 27:1

Admonitory Use

So then we conclude with warning and with comfort. **First** a *warning*. What we have read this morning is not a myth. It is true history. The event at the Red Sea really happened. That means that no one can escape. All of life is a Red Sea moment. You cannot escape this war. You either belong to Christ or the Dragon. Jesus said “Whoever is not with me is against me” (Matthew 12:30). All those who belong to the Dragon will be judged on the last Day. Pharaoh’s army tried to flee but the sea fell upon them and they perished. So it is will be for all who belong to the Dragon on the last Day. There will be no escape, no where to run, no where to hide. All of God’s enemies will find that the sea of God’s wrath will fall upon them on that Terrible Day. The Dragon’s seed will fall in the hands of the Living God. Dear friend if that is you, there is only one thing you can do, you must do what Israel did. In v.31 we read that “Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians, so the people *feared the LORD*, and *they believed in the LORD* and in his servant Moses.” That is your only hope of escape. Turn to the LORD in fear and in faith. Fear the Lord only and put your faith in Him. Jesus promises that if you do, you will escape the lake of fire. “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.”³²

Consolatory Use

Lastly, this doctrine is for *comfort*. Take comfort dear Christian. Take comfort. When God saved you, He crushed the Dragon’s head so that He can never truly harm you again. The worse that the Dragon can do is to chase you

³² John 5:24

into the sea. But we already know how that ends. If you are saying at this moment “Yes but I’m still feel like a dragon, I still sin. I deserve to drown in that sea.” Of course you do. Israel didn’t drown because they were better than the Egyptians. You will not perish in that sea of wrath because you are better than other men. No, you will be saved, because Someone already drown in your place. In Psalm 69 we have a description of what Christ underwent on the cross. Do you know how the cross is described? As being swallowed up in the deep waters. Psalm 69:1-2 “Save me, O God! For the waters have come up to my neck. ²I sink in deep mire, where there is no foothold; I have come into deep waters, and the flood sweeps over me.” Only God didn’t save Jesus. Christ perished in the deep waters of God’s wrath. The flood swept over Him until He died. Loved ones, that dark wicked dragon in you—that sin that is wicked bad—has already been swallowed up. God cast all your sins, and all my sins into the depths of the sea when Jesus was nailed to that cross. The dragon has been crushed. There is nothing left to fear, but God alone. Your sins are dead upon the shore. Not one of them remains. Not one is left to enslave you, to torment you, to condemn you.

Christ, the true and better Moses, called to lead a people home
 Standing bold to earthly powers, God's great glory to be known
 With His arms stretched wide to heaven, see the waters part in two
 See the veil is torn forever, cleansed with blood we pass now through³³

Amen

³³ Christ The True And Better by Keith Getty, Matt Boswell, and Matt Papa