

Title:            **“THUS THE LORD SAVED ISRAEL”**

Text:             Exodus 14:30-31

Subject:         *God’s Way of Salvation*

Date:            Tuesday Evening — March 4, 2008

Tape:            Exodus #68

Readings:       *Bobbie Estes and Rex Bartley*

Introduction:

How does God save his people? That is the question I want to answer in this message. The first fourteen chapters of Exodus were written specifically to answer this question. I am certain of that because that is exactly how Moses was inspired of God to summarize all that he wrote in those first chapters of the Book of Exodus. Look with me at the summary Moses gives of these fourteen chapters in Exodus 14:30-31.

(Exodus 14:30-31) “Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. (31) And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses.”

Did you ever wonder where the children of Israel got the weapons of war with which they defeated their many enemies in the wilderness and the Canaanites? They had none in Egypt and carried none out of Egypt. But on the seventh day after the passover night, when “*all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt*” (Exodus 12:41), Israel crossed the Red Sea by the mighty hand of God and “*saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore.*” All their foes were drowned in the sea and their bodies washed up upon the shore. There, spread before them were all the armies of Egypt dead upon the shore, with all their weapons beside them. Moses and the Israelites gathered up the weapons of their defeated foes. Thus, the Lord God not only defeated the Egyptians for them, but also armed his chosen with the weapons by which the Egyptians hoped to destroy them. When I think of that, I am reminded of two most blessed declarations of Holy Scripture (Romans 8:35-39 and Isaiah 54:17).

(Romans 8:35-39) “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (36) As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. (37)

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. (38) For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, (39) Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

(Isaiah 54:17) “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue *that* shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This *is* the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness *is* of me, saith the LORD.”

There is a reference to our text (Exodus 14:30-31) in Psalm 74. God’s people are described by the psalmist as his congregation which he purchased, his inheritance which he redeemed and wherein he dwells (v. 2) and his turtledove (v. 19), the people of his covenant (v. 20). Then, in verses 12-14, he describes God’s salvation of Israel on the day they crossed the Red Sea.

“God *is* my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth. Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters. Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, *and* gavest him *to be* meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.” (Psalms 74:12-14)

This is Moses’ inspired summary of the whole thing: — “*Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians.*” How did he save them? How does the Lord God save his people by his grace? Let’s take one more look at this chapter and see. Let’s camp for a little while by the waters of the Red Sea. May God the Holy Spirit give us eyes to see Christ’s glories there, as plainly as we see them on the shore of Galilee.

## **A CRADLE OF MIRACLES**

Henry Law described Israel’s infancy as an “infancy in a cradle of miracles.” I cannot think of a better way to describe it. The nation of Israel came into being by the power of God, giving Abraham a son in his old age. Remember, Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born, and Sarah was 90! Isaac and his sons prospered and prevailed miraculously, against all odds, in the clear sunshine of God’s intervening hand. The Lord watched

over them and blessed them, not in obscurity, but in the open manifestations of his miraculous care. These things were a manifest display of what God’s children should always expect. Our experience is but the echo those constant, miraculous interventions of divine providence. — “*God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth.*”

At last, they came down into Egypt, just seventy souls in great need, brought there by the direct arrangement of Joseph, their brother, the man they betrayed and sold into bondage, the man they thought they had killed. But Joseph was on the throne in Egypt. Everything in Egypt had been placed in the hands of Joseph to save much people alive. Though they were oppressed in Egypt, persecuted and terribly abused by their taskmasters, — “*The children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them*” (Exodus 1:7).

### **HEDGED IN**

Now, let’s jump ahead. At last, at the end of 400 years, the children of Israel are brought out of Egypt by the mighty hand of God.

- The Passover
- The Spoils

How they must have danced as they marched out of that horrible place of slavery and misery! — “*It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord*” (Exodus 12:32).

But their dancing did not last long. **Soon the children of Israel were hedged in on every side.** At first they marched like soldiers in a dress parade returning from a great victory. Then, suddenly, Pharaoh and the Egyptians are on their back. They ran until they could run no further. Every door of escape is shut before them. Their joy turns to fear. Hope withers and despair sets in! The fiery and cloudy pillar they followed led to the very jaws of destruction!

- In front of them break the billows of the Red Sea.
- On either side stands a wall of rocks, impossible to climb.
- Behind them are the enraged Egyptians.
- Within them are evil hearts of unbelief, quaking with fear.

If they move forward, they march into a watery grave. If they do not, they will be mowed down like dried grass by the Egyptians’ swords. Everything

is ready to devour them. A cruel, shameful death seems certain and imminent.

**Every child of God knows something about these things.** Those who have never been in bondage have never been set free. Those who have never been the pit wherein is no water, have never been delivered from the pit. Those who have never been the Lord’s prisoners have never become the Lord’s freemen. Many dreary years I slaved at bricks, beneath the yoke of hell’s foul prince. Then the Spirit of God called me to peace and freedom by the gospel. I thought my chains would break with ease. Canaan’s sweet rest seemed near. But suddenly terrors gathered around my soul. The memory and guilt of sin spread like a vast ocean of blackness before me. — “*Deep called unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and billows went over me*” (Psalm 42:7) — The Lord “*cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me*” (Jonah 2:3). The law thundered loud in my soul, with the fierce sword of justice glittering before me. My corruptions, my iniquities, my transgressions and my sins rose like mountains reaching to the skies around me.

**All hope was gone, because all hope in self was gone. I was shut in and hedged about on every side.** Five things suddenly dawned upon his soul, by which all my carnal hopes were slain, by which I was at last brought to faith in Christ. Sooner or later, you are going to have to deal with these five things.

1. **I saw my sin.** God the Holy Spirit convinced me of my sin (John 16:8), of the sinfulness of my sinful deeds, the sinfulness of my heart and nature, and the sinfulness of my righteousness. I saw that even my noblest deeds are filthy rags in God’s sight.
2. **I saw the infinite holiness of God’s law.** The law of God requires perfection. God cannot and will not accept anything less than absolute perfection (Leviticus 22:21). Whatever I bring to God, if he accepts it, must be perfect.
3. **I saw that the only hope for sinners is a perfect substitute.** I must have someone to obey the law and accomplish righteousness for me. I must have someone to make an infinite, justice satisfying atonement for

my sins. That Substitute I found in Jesus Christ the Son of God (Romans 3:24-26; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

4. **I saw that faith in Christ is the only way a sinner can ever find acceptance with God.** God’s gracious salvation comes to sinners through faith in Christ (Ephesians 2:8). All who believe on the Son of God have everlasting life (John 3:36). **But I could not believe. I could not muster faith from within myself.**
5. And **I saw that faith in Christ is the gift of God.** Faith in Christ is not within the realm of human ability. It is the gift of God (John 1:12-13; Ephesians 2:8-9). Faith is the operation of God, the work of grace in a man’s soul (Colossians 2:12). It is not the result of man’s “free will.” Faith is given to sinners according to God’s sovereign will (Romans 9:16). — **I was shut up to a sovereign God, shut up to the will of God.** He could save me, or he could damn me. He could give me faith, or leave me alone. It was entirely up to him.

By these five truths I was slain; all hope in myself was gone. And I was compelled to fall down before Christ, suing for mercy, crying, “*God, be merciful to me, the sinner...Lord, if you will, you can make me whole.*”

**Now, “I through the law am dead to the law,” because I have been crucified with Christ** (Galatians 2:19-21), dead to the law absolutely! There is no hope held out to any man in the law. The sinner’s only hope of salvation is faith in Christ. You must trust the Son of God. By faith in Christ, we who believe fulfill the law of God (Romans 3:31). We must never allow anyone to bring us back under the yoke of the law (Galatians 5:1).

The Son of God says, “*Look unto me, and be ye saved,*” and sweetly hems us in on every side, forcing us by omnipotent mercy to look upward to him, crying, “*Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name*” (Psalm 142:7). And “*He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me*” (Psalm 18:19). How I thank God for that grace that shut me up to Christ! — “*Thus the Lord saved Israel that day!*”

**GOD’S MESSENGER**

“Faith come by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” So to create faith in his unbelieving people, the Lord God sent them a messenger, a prophet to lead them in the way. **Look at Israel’s messenger.** Moses rides above this swell of trouble, in all the calmness of unshaken faith. Faith in Christ is a bolt to shut out fear. It is a door to let in peace. Moses saw the raging sea before them. He heard the rattle of the Egyptian’s swords behind them. He saw the mountainous rocks surrounding them. But he was undaunted. He knew that all is well when Christ goes before! — All is safe when God protects! — All is sure when he gives his promise! And he had God’s promise (Exodus 3:12).

(Exodus 3:12) “And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this *shall be* a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.”

Moses had been taught that the mighty Savior, the incarnate God, would spring from the tribe of Judah. The tribe must be preserved that held the promised Seed. Therefore he confidently looked for God’s salvation, and commands the children of Israel to believe God (Exodus 14:13-14).

(Exodus 14:13-14) “And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will show to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. (14) The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.”

What shall we fear, when the Gospel-banner flies before us? Faith defies fear and foe. — “**If God be for us, who can be against us?** — *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, **how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?** — **Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect?** It is God that justifieth. — **Who is he that condemneth?** It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. — **Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?**”*

The waves are deep. Our foes are many and strong. There is no help in self. What shall we do? — “*Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord!*”

- **Here is a Gospel warning.** — There is no hope in self! — No help in your will, your works, or your worth!

- **Here are Gospel tidings.** — “*See the salvation of the Lord!*” Christ has finished all. He paid the debt. He satisfied each claim of God’s holiness, justice and truth. Alone He brought in everlasting righteousness. He trod the winepress alone. He conquered death, hell and the grave. He put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. The work was gloriously accomplished by him alone! — “*Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord!*” — “*The Lord will fight for you!*” You need only to be still. Who can resist when he uplifts his arm? Omnipotence is your defense!

Neither the wrath of man, nor the malice of devils, nor the rage of hell can harm, when the Good Shepherd says, “*I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish.*” Someone said, “Stand, then, behind a fighting God, and you are high as heaven above all harm. Raise not the battle-cry, as if the charge was yours. Let all your breath be prayer and praise.”

Then the Lord spoke by his messenger again. He said, “*Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward*” (Exodus 14:15). **That is the watchword for God’s Israel.** Forward, onward, upward, heaven-ward! Dangers threaten, — Forward! Ease allures, — Onward! Worldly pleasures seduce, — Upward! Hell rages, — Heaven-ward! God speaks distinctly. — “*Go forward!*” He will not lead except in safety’s path.

I can hear carnal reason say, “‘*Go forward*’ contradicts ‘*Stand still.*’” But when grace gives light faith has sight and sees all that God speaks as one harmonious whole. We take no step to expiate our sins, to pay our debts, to appease divine justice and wrath, or to procure redemption or righteousness. Yet, seeing the salvation of the Lord, the believing sinner goes forward in faith, growing in the grace and knowledge of Christ (Philippians 3:7-15; Hebrews 12:1-3).

(Philippians 3:7-15) “But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. (8) Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ, (9) And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: (10) That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; (11) If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection

of the dead. (12) Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. (13) Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, (14) I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (15) Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.”

(Hebrews 12:1-3) “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, (2) Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (3) For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.”

Heaven is reached, not by toil, but in toil. Blessings descend, not for deeds, but on deeds. Faith comes with empty hand. Christ fills it with salvation. The hand Christ fills with himself and fills with his grace, then brings the sacrifices acceptable and well-pleasing to God by Christ Jesus, sacrifices of praise, devotion, love and obedience. — “*Thus the Lord saved Israel that day.*”

- He sent a messenger.
- He commanded faith.
- He wrought faith in them.
- He led them forward.

### **CHRIST HIMSELF**

Now, let’s look away from the Egyptians. Look away from the sea. Look away from Israel. And look away from the Lord’s messenger. Look now at the Lord Jesus Christ himself, the Angel of the Lord who performed the work of salvation for his people (Exodus 14:19-20).

(Exodus 14:19-20) “And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the

cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: (20) And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness *to them*, but it gave light by night *to these*: so that the one came not near the other all the night.”

Thus the Lord Jesus is a high wall of defense for us. He encompasses his blood-bought flock. They who would injure his redeemed must first defeat omnipotence. There is no passage for the destroyer’s sword, but through him who is our Shield. But he who is to us a pillar of fire is to the world a pillar of darkness. He who is our confidence is confusion to the unbelieving.

- What floods of light flow from the crucified Christ to the believing heart!
- But to the unbelieving, the preaching of the cross is foolishness.

**Next, the Angel of the Lord, our blessed Christ, opened the Sea by the rod of Moses** (Exodus 14:21-22).

(Exodus 14:21-22) “And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry *land*, and the waters were divided. (22) And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry *ground*: and the waters *were* a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.”

Moses lifted his rod with his hand and the sea parted before Israel. Do you remember that when the Lord first appeared to Moses he made his hand leprous, and then made it clean? It is that hand that he used to deliver his people. There is much to be learned from that; but I see something more here.

Moses, as you know, represents the law of God; and here we see the Angel of the Lord accomplishing the salvation of his chosen, performing the wonders of his grace by his law. The very law of God that would have condemned us without Christ, now, because Christ has fulfilled all its demands, opens the way and demands the deliverance of our souls. — Justice satisfied demands that every blood bought sinner must go free!

Christ Jesus my discharge procured,  
The whole of wrath divine endured:  
The law’s tremendous curse He bore;

Justice can never ask for more.

Payment God cannot twice demand,  
First at my bleeding Surety’s hand,  
And then demand the price from me,  
For whom Christ died at Calvary.

Be still, my soul, and find sweet rest –  
The merits of my great High Priest,  
His righteousness and precious blood,  
Have satisfied the Holy God.

I’ll trust Christ’s efficacious blood,  
And never fear the wrath of God,  
Since Jesus Christ has died for me,  
And lives for me to intercede.

*“Thus the Lord saved Israel that day!”*

### **THE RESULT OF GOD’S SALVATION**

Look at our text again, and let me show you that which was the result of God’s salvation. In verse 30 the Spirit of God tells us, — *“Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians.”* Then he tells us what the result of this great salvation was. The result is fivefold; and it is exactly the same today. These are the things that always accompany salvation.

- *“Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore.”* — Sin slain!
- *“And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians.”* — Sin judged and condemned!
- *“And the people feared the LORD.”*
- *“The people believed the LORD.”*
- Those saved by the Lord God gave him, and him alone all the praise (Exodus 15:1-2).

(Exodus 15:1-2) “Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. (2) The LORD *is* my strength and song, and he

is become my salvation: he *is* my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father’s God, and I will exalt him.”

The Holy Spirit erects a memorial column on the shore, and writes this worthy record. — *‘Thus the Lord saved Israel that day!’* It tells out the glory of God and the glory of the gospel. It reveals to use the way God saves all his people by his free grace in Christ. **The Lord saved Israel that day...**

- According to his purpose.
- To fulfill his covenant promise.
- Because of his choice.
- By blood. — The Passover Lamb.
- By effectual power and distinguishing grace.
- By the Word of God — Proclaimed by a man.
- Completely. — Every foe conquered, never to rise again!
- For his own Glory, for the glory of his own great name.

May he be pleased so to save you, for his own name’s sake.

Amen.