

# Go Forward!

Ex 14:13-15 and 15:1-15

## Introduction:

1. The children of Israel had been saved from the judgment of God by the shedding and sprinkling of the blood of a lamb
2. The march to Canaan had begun – they were finally leaving Egypt
  - a. But their troubles were not over
  - b. In fact, they had only just begun
  - c. The sea was in front of them – Pharaoh’s army was behind them and mountains around them – they were trapped
  - d. They could see the dust clouds in the distance from the chariots
  - e. There were no ferry boats to carry them across the Red Sea
  - f. The situation was basically impossible
3. Then Moses looked upward to God for guidance – vs 13-15 ←
4. We stand at the brink of the new year
  - a. We don’t know what we will face as individuals
    1. Hopefully times of tremendous blessings
    2. Maybe times of pain and distress
  - b. It is easy to trust God when everything is going well – but what about when things aren’t going well?
    1. You are diagnosed with a terminal illness.
    2. Too much month left at the end of each pay check.
    3. You have a prodigal in your family.
    4. You have a rebellious child and constant family problems.
    5. You get a call from the local jail.
    6. Spouse calls from another state and he or she is not coming back
    7. Everything seems to be falling in on you.
    8. You loose you job.
  - c. We don’t know what we will face as a church
    1. Times of tremendous blessings
    2. Times of testing and trouble
5. Let us determine to GO FORWARD!
  - a. Personally –
    1. Forward in Bible reading, prayer, holiness, service
    2. Going forward means advancement and progress
  - b. Corporately
    1. Let our church go forward
    2. Let’s not stand still or go backward

## **I. Going Forward Means Letting Go of the Past – vs 12**

12 Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.

### **A. The Children of Israel**

1. Had become accustomed to slavery -- They were comfortable in it
2. They even began to complain after God set them free
3. Some of the Israelites were willing to settle for a life of slavery rather than the freedom that God was providing

### **B. For Us**

1. Sometimes we concentrate on the way things used to be
2. We get in our comfort zone and we don't want to change
3. No one moves forward by living in the past
  - a) *Remember the past -- Don't forget the past*
  - b) *But don't be paralyzed by the past*
4. Put behind you the past heartaches, failures, past bitter experiences

## **II. Going Forward Requires Reliance on God – vs 13**

13 And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.

### **A. For the Children of Israel**

1. The enemy behind them, the sea in front of them and mountains surrounding them – the people were afraid
2. It would be natural to be afraid in those circumstances
3. Moses saw the fear on their faces and told them not to fear
4. He told them to stand still and see what God would do
  - a) *The children of Israel were powerless to dry up the sea, or level the mountains or annihilate the hosts of Egypt*
  - b) *Moses told them to trust God and go forward*
5. After all that God had done for them, the children of Israel were still not sure that God was going to bring them out

### **B. For Us**

1. When we face the new year, we face the unknown
2. We don't know what challenges we will face in 2010
3. We need to follow the advice that Moses gave to the children of Israel – Fear not and go forward
4. We need a firm reliance on God
5. Job had this kind of reliance on God – Job 13:15

15 Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.

### **III. Going Forward Requires Obedience to God**

#### **A. For the Children of Israel**

1. There was decisive obedience
  - a) *They had to decide to obey*
  - b) *Moses held out the rod of God over the water*
  - c) *The people had seen wonders done by God through Moses*
  - d) *The rod was a symbol of divine authority, power and discipline*
  - e) *Where it pointed, they had to go*
  - f) *The guided way is the guarded way – only when they went forward did the pillar of fire and the pillar of cloud stand between them and the Egyptians*
  - g) *Not only were the children of Israel dividing from the Egyptians, but they were also dividing from their old lives*
2. There was divisive obedience – vs 27 ←
  - a) *A division occurred in the Red Sea*
  - b) *The children of Israel could only go forward when the waters were divided*
  - c) *The sea opened up and great walls of water stood up on both sides of them*

#### **B. For Us**

1. We need to decide to obey
  - a) *Decide today that you will obey God – no matter what*
  - b) *Purpose in your heart, like Daniel, to obey God*
  - c) *Obey without wavering – Heb 10:23*  
*23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)*
  - d) *James says it like this – Ja 1:6*  
*6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.*
2. There is no rod today
  - a) *We are guided by God's Word*
    - (1) We go where God's Word says to go
    - (2) We avoid those areas that God's Word says to avoid
  - b) *God's people are guided through the Holy Spirit today*
3. We won't go wrong following our Savior  
*Joh 8:12 ... I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*
4. We also need divisive obedience
  - a) *A greater divide between the old life and the new life in Christ*
  - b) *Closer to the Lord we grow, the further from the world we grow*
  - c) *The closer to the Lord we become the more we set our affections on things above not on things below*

#### **IV. Going Forward Leads to Service of God**

##### **A. Going Forward Caused Worship – Ex 15:1**

1 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.

1. The people sang and praised the Lord
2. They gave him all the glory
3. When we go forward and God does great things for us, then we will worship the Lord and praise Him more

##### **B. Going Forward Was a Witness to Others - vs 14-15**

14 The people shall hear, and be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina. 15 Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away.

1. Others would hear the singing and wonder what was going on
2. This gave the Israelites a chance to explain what God had done
3. An example of this is found in the case of Rahab – Josh 2:9-12

##### **C. Going Forward Brought a New Sense of Wonder – 15:11**

11 Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?

1. Going forward and seeing God do great things increases our sense of wonder

Conclusion:

1. We can stand still
2. We can go backward or sideways
3. God wants us to go forward – let's do it
4. Maybe you have been camped out in the place of hurt feelings for too long and it's time to pull up stakes & GO FORWARD!
5. Maybe you have been camped out in the place of anger for too long and it is time for you to pull up stakes and GO FORWARD!
6. Maybe you have been camped out in the place of bitterness for too long and it is time for you to pull up stakes and GO FORWARD!
7. Maybe you have been camped out in the place of laziness / easiness or comfort long enough and it is time to pull up the stakes and GO FORWARD!
8. The example of Gladys Aylward – missionary to China 50 yrs ago ←

HBC #76 – Last Sunday of the Year

Gladys Aylward, missionary to China more than fifty years ago, was forced to flee when the Japanese invaded Yangcheng. But she could not leave her work behind. With only one assistant, she led more than a hundred orphans over the mountains toward Free China. In their book "The Hidden Price of Greatness," Ray Besson and Ranelda Mack Hunsicker tell what happened: "During Gladys's harrowing journey out of war-torn Yangcheng ... she grappled with despair as never before. After passing a sleepless night, she faced the morning with no hope of reaching safety. A 13-year-old girl in the group reminded her of their much-loved story of Moses and the Israelites crossing the Red Sea.

"But I am not Moses," Gladys cried in desperation.

"Of course you aren't," the girl said, "but Jehovah is still God."

When Gladys and the orphans made it through, they proved once again that no matter how inadequate we feel, God is still God, and we can trust in him.

13 And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew 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. 15 And the LORD said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, **that they go forward:**

27 And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.

Josh 2:9 And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. 10 For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. 11 And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath. 12 Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the LORD, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token: