

Great Moments in Faith: The Exodus

There are many great men and women of faith in the Bible, and just as many awe inspiring moments when we look and think “if I were that person” or “if I was there” we would have believed and never doubted again. But would we really? How different were those moments from what we experience on a daily basis?

We believe that what makes these moments of faith so great is not a unique situation but instead a faithful response to God working as God often does. This series looks at those great moments, and by putting ourselves in the character’s shoes, both big and little, we will try and personalize these stories and see how we fit in those stories on a daily basis and hopefully how we can respond better to God working in our own lives and so seize those great moments of faith for ourselves.

Passage: Exodus 14: The Crossing of the Sea of Reeds

Background: The people of Israel had been slaves for generations. Imagine having your entire people told for as long as you can remember that you are worthless, your family is worthless, you aren’t as good as the people who mock you and treat you like dirt. That’s where the Israelites were until God told them that they were worth something to God and led them to freedom. That must have felt wonderful, someone let alone, a god, THE God, taking an interest in you, believing in you for the first time in your life standing up for you.

We enter the story when Israel has fled Egypt with God leading the way in a pillar of fire. But now their way is blocked by the Sea of Reeds, the Egyptian army is coming towards them and it’s getting dark.

Don’t Miss: This happened at night, with no microphone, and no electric lights. The wind was blowing strong enough to move water and would have been incredibly loud, with clouds rolling in over the moon and stars.

What would this have been like if you put yourself in the shoes of....

Moses: You speak directly with God and could see the water part. You know why the fire left and you heard God’s reassurance. But the responsibility of leadership is on you as well.

The leaders: You are standing near Moses but might not have heard as well. You trust Moses but it’s a tight scrape and you feel the mass of people pressing on you.

The average Israelite: It’s dark, you’re pressed in among millions of people, there is a roaring wind, no microphones, and God seems to stop leading you (pillar of fire leaving) and goes to the enemy.

An Egyptian Soldier: These were your slaves, inferior people. Who could love them, and how could they beat you, the mightiest nation on earth? You were following your God, Pharaoh.

Questions:

- How much different would the experience have been for the average Israelite than for Moses? What might each of them have known, experienced, and felt? What might these different people have been thinking about God and their situation that night?
- What would you have done in each of the different people’s shoes? How would you have acted differently?

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- When have you felt like the Israelites that night (afraid, defeated, uncertain, worthless)? The soldiers (overconfident, scornful, superior)? How did you act in those situations?
- What might have happened if the people in this account acted like you normally act in those situations?
- Where was God in all of this? Where do you think God is when you feel that way?
- How much do you think God has been working in your life like God was at work in the Exodus?
- What does it mean to you that God has the same confidence in you that God had in the Israelites and finds you just as worthy of saving?
- We normally put ourselves in Moses' shoes only, but does it lessen the miracle any if we find ourselves experiencing God at work from the perspective of one of the other characters in the story?
- How did everyone finally see God at work? Did everyone see God's hand in it at the end?
- Why/how did this event become one of the most pivotal moments of faith for the Israelites for the next three thousand years?

The Sticking Points (Take-Away Talking Points):

- Just because you don't feel worth saving doesn't mean you aren't. God will still move a Sea for you.
- Being afraid does not mean God is not in control or is not working.
- Looking back is sometimes needed to see God at work, like the Israelites and seeing the bodies at dawn.
- Not everyone sees God at work the same way or at the same time. In the same situation someone might be able to see God's hand better than you, or perhaps worse and needs your guidance.
- Our response to a crisis matters more than the size of the crisis in deciding whether something will be a great moment of faith or not.