



Mt Lebanon Evangelical Presbyterian Church

Making and Growing Followers of Jesus

April 18, 2024

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ!

Many thanks to Bruce Tenenbaum, Pastor Cinda, and everyone else who held down the fort while I was away last week. And thank you for your prayers as we traveled to Oklahoma to say goodbye to our dear family friend, Judy. In addition to spending time with her family, I was able to connect with several high school friends I had not seen in 35 years. It was amazing to see how faithful God had been through the rollercoasters of our lives and through the generations in our families.

Our God is faithful in good times and in bad, and we will be leaning into this idea as we study the Exodus story for this week. Buckle up – we are going to speed through the dramatic stories of the plagues, the first Passover, and the deliverance through the Red Sea. You may want to read Exodus 5-15 at home this week before you come to church on Sunday.

Last week, you heard about Moses meeting the Lord at the Burning Bush. God showed Moses who He was and commissioned him to guide the Israelites out of Egypt. It had to be an unforgettable encounter so that Moses would have the courage to do all he needed to do next. He had to convince the Israelites to trust God at work through him, and then he had to do the even more difficult task of convincing Pharaoh to let the people go. Plague after plague after plague did nothing to budge Pharaoh's stony heart. Only after the last plague did he change his mind, the plague that brought about the death of his own firstborn son and all the other firstborns across the land, while God spared the Israelite children who were protected by the blood of the Passover lamb.

Even with these supernatural acts displaying God's power, His own people doubted the Lord's guidance when they looked up and saw Pharaoh pursuing them. They were cornered against the sea and saw no way out. They complained to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die?" (Ex 14:11). Moses reassured them, "The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still" (Ex 14:14). And sure enough, the Lord parted the Red Sea, and they crossed over on dry ground. As soon as they were safe, God let the water crash over Pharaoh's pursuing army and destroy it. Finally, "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" (Ex 14:31).

What is your first reaction when you face opposition or struggle? Way too often, my first reaction is panic, despair, or anger. It is so easy to focus on the mountain of problems rather than on the Mountain Mover. There are days when it may feel easier to give up than to have faith. When will we trust the Lord to fight for us? When will we learn to stand still and see the deliverance of the Lord? Thanks be to God, we serve an infinitely patient Lord who is faithful to us even when we go weak in the knees.

As you prepare your hearts for worship this week, spend a little time thinking about what you are afraid of or what feels overwhelming in your life. Lay it before the Lord and ask Him to show you where He is in the situation. Be still in His presence as you let go of your fears. May our Almighty, Delivering God take your tiny little mustard seed of faith and show you how He moves mountains.

Blessings,
Pastor Carolyn