

THE STORY OF MOSES

Aunt Hattie's Bible Stories

by

Harriet I. Fisher

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There is a free paraphrase of Scripture passages in use quite frequently throughout this book in the interest of youthful minds.

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CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE RED SEA AND THE SONG

Turn to a map of Egypt and the Wilderness. Doubtless there is one in the back of your Bible. At Succoth you will see that the land of Canaan was not very far away. If the people of Israel had gone by way of Philistines they might have been there sooner.

God didn't want them to go that way because He said that as soon as they had war they would run right back to Egypt. So God led them through the Wilderness, toward the Red Sea and they encamped the next time at Etham in the edge of the Wilderness.

God went before Israel in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Wasn't He gracious? All they had to do was to watch the cloud. That would be easier than looking for highway numbers, wouldn't it?

The next time they moved it was to a place called Pihahiroth, between Migdol and the sea.

It was just like marching all of this great company of people into a big trap and God knew just what would happen. Pharaoh would by this time be regretting that the Israelites had gone from him and he would send out to bring them back.

My, what a fine place to catch them!

Mountains were on both sides and the sea in front of them. If the Egyptians could slip up behind them, how easy it would be to take them.

God said He put His people into this tight place to show the Egyptians that He was God.

Sure enough over in the palace Pharaoh and his servants talked the matter over and said, **“Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go?”**

Pharaoh, as stubborn as ever, ordered his chariot, six hundred of the best chariots, and then all of the chariots of Egypt made ready. To each chariot a captain was appointed. After the chariots, followed the horsemen, cavalry we would call them, last of all, the infantry or walking army. What a military display that must have been!

“And the children of Israel lifted up their eyes and saw them coming,” and instead of looking to God, believing in His power to save them, they looked at the enemy and were panic-stricken.

Then they began to curse Moses.

They said, *“Why didn’t you let us alone in Egypt? Were there no places to bury us there that you have brought us out here by the sea to die in this wilderness? We told you to let us alone so we could serve the Egyptians.”*

How steady Moses appeared before this frightened apparently helpless multitude!

He didn’t chide or rebuke them, but simply said, *“Don’t be afraid. Stand still and see what the Lord will do; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see again. The Lord will do your fighting for you, so be quiet and rest in Him.”*

Moses, himself, seems to have been a little nervous under the strain of the moment. He went to talk to God about it, and God said, *“Why are you crying to me? Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward.”*

Forward? Right into the sea? We’ll find out what happened. The Lord was showing them that He was the Almighty God whose power was unlimited.

God said to Moses, *“Lift up your rod and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it so that the children of Israel can walk through on dry ground and I’ll harden the hearts of the Egyptians. They will follow my people and I will let them know that I am the Lord and will bring honor upon My name.”*

Then God moved the cloud that went ahead of the people of Israel and dropped it behind them, right between their camp and the camp of the Egyptians. On Israel’s side it gave light so they could see their way; on the enemies’ side it was dark. They could not come near to each other all night.

As God commanded so Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and the Lord caused a strong wind to blow all that night. It divided the sea, and very early in the morning the children of Israel began their journey to the other side, between mountains of water piled high on the right hand and on the left.

When the Egyptians saw them going over on dry ground in the midst of the sea, of course they hurried after them. God looked down through the glory cloud and troubled the Egyptians that they might not overtake the Israelites. The ground became wet and the path very muddy, their chariot wheels dragged heavily, and in terror they cried, **“Let us turn back, away from Israel, for God fights for them and against us.”**

Then God told Moses to stretch out his hand over the sea and when he did, the walls of water came down and all of the Egyptians were drowned, not one of them lived!

“Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the shore. 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.”

When they realized that God, by His wonderful love and power, had actually delivered them from their enemies, all of the multitude of Israel burst into a great song of praise.

It is the first song in the Bible.

In Egypt they groaned and wept because of hardship and suffering. Now on the eastern shore of the Red Sea, with their enemies dead and bondage passed, they were free.

At last they could sing the song of the redeemed.

Moses led the men in a great chorus of song unto the Lord. It ran thus, —

“I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously;
The horse and the rider hath He thrown into the sea.
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 Lord shall reign forever and ever.”

Miriam, sister of Moses and Aaron, took a musical instrument, called a timbrel, and led the women’s chorus in answer to the song of Moses and the men of Israel, this way, —

“Sing ye to the Lord,
For He hath triumphed gloriously;
The horse and his rider
Hath He thrown into the sea.”

What a time of rejoicing it must have been!

Every word of the song was praise to God, not a word for Moses, Aaron or anyone in the camp because the Lord and He alone was their Deliverer.

I am thinking, too, what a time of joy and gladness will come to the Church of Jesus Christ, God's redeemed people, when He comes to take us to Himself. Even so come, Lord Jesus.

~ end of chapter 16 ~

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