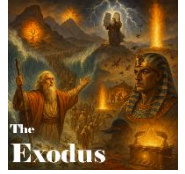




**Between Promise and Pursuit:  
Trusting God in the Wilderness  
Exodus 13:1-14:9  
(Lesson #13)**



**13:1 ¶ The LORD said to Moses, 2 "Consecrate to me all the firstborn. Whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of man and of beast, is mine."**

In this passage, Yahweh extends His instructions to Moses, introducing a **new command** that had not been mentioned earlier in connection with the Passover or the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The focus now shifts to the **consecration of the firstborn**.

The Hebrew term translated **"consecrate"** carries the sense of **sanctifying, hallowing, or dedicating**. Israel is commanded to **set apart** the firstborn—the **firstborn sons**—as **belonging to Yahweh**.

This consecration applies not only to human offspring but also to animals: whatever **first opens the womb** is **claimed by God**. In this way, both the people and their possessions are reminded that the first and best belong to Him.

This principle is later elaborated in **Leviticus 12**, and its observance is seen in the New Testament. **Joseph and Mary, faithful to the Law**, presented Jesus in the temple after His birth (Luke 2:21-24).

The consecration of the firstborn served as a living memorial of **Israel's redemption**. Each time a firstborn son was redeemed, parents had the opportunity to recount to their children the story of God's mighty deliverance from Egypt.

Consider: ***"Israel had been saved through the destruction of Egypt's first-born, and now they were required to dedicate their own first-born as a constant memorial of their deliverance."***

**Vs 3 Then Moses said to the people, "Remember this day in which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of slavery, for by a strong hand the LORD brought you out from this place. No leavened bread shall be eaten."**

Moses turns immediately to the people with a command that is both **urgent** and **enduring**: they **must remember this day**. It was not simply the day they left Egypt; it was the day they were **delivered from bondage**, the day their identity as God's redeemed people was established, the day a **nation was born**.

This remembrance was not to be vague or sentimental. Moses emphasizes that their freedom was achieved not by their own strength or cleverness, but by the **mighty hand of Yahweh**. The exodus was God's work alone, a demonstration of His power and His covenant faithfulness.

Because of this, the people were to **mark the occasion** with a **visible sign**: the eating of unleavened bread.

Moses repeats this command often, underscoring its seriousness. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was inseparably bound to the Passover, symbolizing purity and separation from Egypt's corruption.

This rhythm of remembrance and obedience finds its echo in Christian worship. Just as Israel was commanded to recall their deliverance, so believers are called to **remember Christ's sacrifice**. Each time we partake of the Lord's Supper, we look back to His death and the redemption He accomplished for us. Yet our remembrance is **never only retrospective**—it is also **anticipatory**. We look forward to His return, when

*“the dead in Christ shall rise first”* (1 Thess. 4:16). Thus, memory and hope are joined together: we **remember God’s past deliverance** and **await His future consummation**.

*Vs 4-5 Today, in the month of Abib, you are going out. 5 And when the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, you shall keep this service in this month.*

Moses reminds the people that their departure from Egypt takes place in the month of Abib (**later known as Nisan**). This detail **anchors their deliverance in time**, ensuring that the memory of God’s salvation is tied to a **specific season in Israel’s calendar**.

Yet Moses does not stop with the present moment. He looks ahead to the fulfillment of God’s promise: Yahweh will bring them into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites, and Jebusites—the land sworn to their fathers, a land described as *“flowing with milk and honey.”* In this way, the exodus is not only about leaving Egypt but also about journeying toward the **inheritance God has prepared**.

When that promise is realized, Israel is commanded to continue observing the service of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

The ritual of remembrance is **not temporary**; it is to be carried with them into the land of promise. Their worship becomes both a **testimony of God’s past deliverance** and a **celebration of His faithfulness** in bringing them **into abundance**.

*Vs 6-7 Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a feast to the LORD. 7 Unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days; no leavened bread shall be seen with you, and no leaven shall be seen with you in all your territory.*

Moses continues by emphasizing the rhythm of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. For seven days the people were to eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day they were to hold a feast dedicated to Yahweh.

This was not intended as a **burdensome ritual** but as a **joyful celebration**—a feast that honored the God who had redeemed them.

At this point, no further details are given about the nature of the feast, only the command to observe it. What is clear, however, is the seriousness of the prohibition against leaven. Moses repeats that **no leavened bread** was to be seen among them, and indeed no leaven was to be found anywhere within their **territory**.

The Hebrew word translated *“territory”* (**gēbûl**) carries the sense of **border, land, or domain**, underscoring that this command extended beyond individual households to the **entire community**.

**The removal of leaven was therefore comprehensive.** It symbolized a complete break from **corruption** and **impurity**, reminding Israel that their deliverance was not partial but total.

Just as Egypt had been **left behind**, so too **leaven was to be purged** from the land during this sacred week..

*Vs 8 You shall tell your son on that day, ‘It is because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.’*

This command reveals that the Feast of Unleavened Bread was not only **theological** but also **deeply instructional**. Israel’s worship was designed to **be passed down** from generation to generation.

Parents were to explain to their children the meaning of the celebration: ***“We do this because of what Yahweh did for us when He brought us out of Egypt.”*** In this way, the ritual became a **living testimony**.

It was not an **empty tradition**, but a **story** embodied in **practice**, a reminder that God Himself had led His people out of bondage with His mighty hand.

The act of telling was as important as the act of doing. By linking the feast to God’s saving work, **each generation** was invited into the **story of redemption**.

***Vs 9 And it shall be to you as a sign on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes, that the law of the LORD may be in your mouth. For with a strong hand the LORD has brought you out of Egypt.***

This verse uses **figurative language** to emphasize the centrality of **God’s law in Israel’s life**. The imagery of a **“sign on your hand”** and a **“memorial between your eyes”** is **not primarily literal** but **symbolic**, pointing to **constant remembrance and obedience**. Similar proverbial expressions appear elsewhere in Scripture (Pro 3:3, Pro 6:20-21).

These passages show that **binding** and **writing** are **metaphors** for **internalizing God’s Word**.

Later Jewish tradition interpreted these commands literally, leading to the practice of wearing phylacteries (tefillin)—small leather boxes containing Torah passages, strapped to the forehead and arm. Inside these boxes are texts from (Ex 13:1–10; 13:11–16; Deut 6:4–9; 11:13–21).

Even today in Israel, observant Jewish men wear phylacteries during prayer, taking these commands literal and at face value.

Jesus referenced this practice in Matthew 23:1–5, rebuking the Pharisees for turning a symbol of devotion into a display of pride (mat 23:1-5). This shows the **danger of externalizing** without first **internalizing!**

The Hebrew word for **“sign”** (אֵימָה, *’ôl*) means a mark or signal, and **“memorial”** suggests **remembrance**. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was to serve as this sign—a **continual reminder of God’s deliverance**.

Notice the phrase: ***“that the law of the LORD may be in your mouth.”*** This **figurative expression** stresses that speech and life should reflect **God’s Word** (see Deut 6:6-7).

The reason for this **command is clear**: ***“For with a strong hand the LORD has brought you out of Egypt.”***

Israel’s obedience was to flow from **gratitude for redemption**. God’s mighty hand accomplished what they could never do themselves—deliverance from bondage.

**APPLICATION:** Just as Israel’s hands, eyes, and mouth were to be governed by God’s law, so our actions, thoughts, and words should be shaped by **Christ’s teaching**.

**Why?** Because with a mighty hand—through His death and resurrection—Jesus delivered us from spiritual slavery (Rom 6:17-18). Our lives should bear the signs of redemption, not through external rituals, but through internal transformation.

***Vs 10 You shall therefore keep this statute at its appointed time from year to year.***

This command flows directly from the previous verse: The word **“therefore”** signals a response to redemption—obedience rooted in gratitude.

The phrase “*at its appointed time*” underscores that worship is not arbitrary but ordered by God’s timing, this observance was not temporary; it was to be **perpetual**, it was to remind every generation of God’s saving power.

**Theologically**, this statute points forward to the **pattern of redemption and remembrance** fulfilled in Christ. Just as Israel remembered their deliverance from Egypt, believers today remember their deliverance from sin through the **Lord’s Supper**.

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*Vs 11-12 "When the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as he swore to you and your fathers, and shall give it to you, 12 you shall set apart to the LORD all that first opens the womb. All the firstborn of your animals that are males shall be the LORD's."*

Moses now gives instructions that **apply after Israel enters the Promised Land**. So this is not to start immediately, but rather when they enter the land!

At this point in the narrative, the expectation might be that entry into the land will happen soon. However, as we know, **Israel’s disobedience** will **delay this fulfillment** for forty years. But that is a topic for another time.

**This command is rooted in covenant promise** and requires **future obedience**: when God fulfills His word, Israel must **respond** by **consecrating the firstborn**.

The phrase “*set apart to the LORD*” (Hebrew: **קָדַשׁ, qadash**) means to **make holy, dedicate, or consecrate**. Every firstborn male—human or animal—was to be regarded as **belonging to Yahweh**. This practice served as a perpetual reminder of the Passover, when God spared Israel’s firstborn but struck down Egypt’s.

The firstborn principle also points forward to Christ, the ultimate Firstborn (Jn 3:16; Col 1:15; Col 1:18).

Thus, every consecrated firstborn foreshadowed the sacrificial gift of God’s Son, who would secure **eternal redemption**.

**The firstborn of animals were to be sacrificed to the LORD, while the firstborn sons were redeemed through a substitute.**

This distinction highlights God’s mercy—He does not demand human sacrifice but provides a **way of redemption**.

**APPLICATION:** This command reminds us that everything we have belongs to God and our response (Rom 12:1-2).

Thus, our first and our best, indeed our very selves, should be offered to Him. For believers, this means living with a posture of consecration—our time, resources, and lives **set apart for Christ**, who gave Himself for us.

*Vs 13 Every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb, or if you will not redeem it you shall break its neck. Every firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem.*

This verse clarifies the **practical application** of consecrating the firstborn. While **clean animals** (those suitable for sacrifice, like sheep and oxen) were offered to the LORD, **unclean animals**—such as donkeys—could not be sacrificed. Instead, they had to be **redeemed with a lamb**.

If the owner refused to redeem the donkey, its neck was to be broken, signifying that it could not be used for personal gain.

Similarly, **every firstborn son** was to be redeemed. This was not optional; it was a command rooted in God's deliverance during the Passover.

The **principle of redemption** found here is profound and sets the stage for **everything about Jesus**:

- The donkey, an unclean animal, could only live through the death of a lamb.
- Likewise, the firstborn son was spared through substitution.

All of this foreshadows the **substitutionary atonement of Christ**, the Lamb of God (John 1:29), who redeems sinners—unclean and condemned—through His death. Without redemption, there is death; with redemption, there is life.

Later, the redemption of the firstborn became a formal ritual in Israel, known as **Pidyon HaBen** (Numbers 18:15–16). Parents would also pay a redemption price (five shekels) to the priests, acknowledging that the child belonged to God.

**APPLICATION:** This verse reminds us that **life requires redemption**. Just as the donkey could not live without a lamb's sacrifice, we cannot live spiritually without Christ's sacrifice. Our salvation is not earned but purchased by the blood of the Lamb. (Rev 5:9).

*Vs 14 And when in time to come your son asks you, 'What does this mean?' you shall say to him, 'By a strong hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, from the house of slavery.'*

This verse anticipates a future moment when children will ask about the meaning of these rituals—the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the consecration of the firstborn. God commands parents to **answer with the story of redemption**: *"By a strong hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, from the house of slavery."*

The purpose of these observances was not mere ceremony but they to be used to teach the next generation about God's mighty acts. Israel's identity was to be rooted in the memory of God's deliverance.

This verse highlights two key truths:

1. **Redemption must be remembered and retold.** God's saving acts are not simply private experiences, but communal stories passed down through generations.
2. **Parents bear the responsibility of spiritual formation.** The home is the primary place where God's works are explained and celebrated.

The phrase *"by a strong hand"* emphasizes God's sovereign power in salvation—a theme echoed throughout the Exodus narrative.

**APPLICATION:** Believers are called to do the same: when children ask about our faith, we must point them to **Christ's redeeming work**. Our testimony should echo this pattern: *"By His cross and resurrection, the Lord brought us out of the bondage of sin and death."*

*Vs 15 For when Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, the LORD killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of animals. Therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all the males that first open the womb, but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.'*

Here Moses provides the **historical rationale** for the ongoing practice of consecrating the firstborn. When Pharaoh hardened his heart and refused to release Israel, God executed the final plague: the death of all firstborn in Egypt—human and animal alike (cf. **Exodus 12:29–30**). This decisive act broke Pharaoh's resistance and secured Israel's freedom.

As a result, Israel is commanded to **sacrifice every firstborn male animal** and **redeem every firstborn son**. This ritual served as a **perpetual reminder of God's judgment and mercy**—judgment on Egypt, mercy on Israel.

The phrase *"Therefore I sacrifice..."* expresses **gratitude** and **obedience**. Israel's worship was a response to God's saving act—a principle that equally applies to us today.

*Vs 16 It shall be as a mark on your hand or frontlets between your eyes, for by a strong hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt."*

This verse echoes **Exodus 13:9**, reinforcing the symbolic nature of these commands. The *"mark on your hand"* and *"frontlets between your eyes"* signify that **God's deliverance should govern both action and thought**. The hand represents **what we do**, and the forehead represents **what we think**.

The language here is **figurative**, emphasizing that Israel's entire life—mind and body—must be shaped by the memory of redemption.

**APPLICATION:** For Christians, this verse calls us to **whole-life discipleship**. Our minds (thoughts) and hands (actions) must reflect Christ's lordship. Spiritual disciplines—Scripture meditation, prayer, and obedience—are the *"marks"* that remind us we are redeemed people. Paul captures this truth (I Cor 6:20).

*Vs 17 ¶ When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near. For God said, "Lest the people change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt."*

Finally, Pharaoh released Israel—but only after the devastating tenth plague. As the people departed, God did not lead them along the most direct route to Canaan—the **Via Maris** ("Way of the Sea"), the coastal highway connecting Egypt to the Levant. Here called *"the way of the land of the Philistines."*

This route was shorter and faster, but it was heavily guarded by Egyptian military outposts and would have brought Israel into immediate conflict with the Philistines, a formidable warrior people.

God knew Israel was **not ready for war**. Their hearts were still fragile, and the risk of fear-driven retreat back to Egypt was real. Instead, God chose a longer, safer route—a path designed for their spiritual formation.

**APPLICATION:** I am sorry, I cannot go further without applying that point to my own life. God's guidance in our lives often feels indirect. We prefer the shortest path, but God leads us on the **best path**—one that **shapes our character and deepens our faith**. His detours are not delays; they are divine designs.

This verse reveals several truths about God's guidance:

- 1) **God's leadership is purposeful, not arbitrary.** He sees dangers we cannot see and plans accordingly. The journey matters as much as the destination. Israel needed time to learn trust, obedience, and dependence on God.
- 2) **God protects His people from overwhelming trials.** He does not allow us to face more than we can bear (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:13).
- 3) **The detour was not a mistake—it was mercy.** God's route was the best route for His glory and their growth. This is Romans 8:28 in action.

As you consider all this, do not miss the grand point, **it was God who led them.** They simply did not leave Egypt. They left under the leadership and direction of Yahweh.

*Vs 18 But God led the people around by the way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea. And the people of Israel went up out of the land of Egypt equipped for battle.*

Instead of the direct coastal route, God led Israel **by way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea.** This was not a random detour—it was a **deliberate path chosen by God** for His purposes.

The mention of the Red Sea here anticipates the dramatic deliverance in **Exodus 14**, But I am getting ahead of myself!)

This is the **second mention of the Red Sea** in Scripture (cf. **Exodus 10:19**, where locusts were driven into the sea). Now, the Red Sea becomes the stage for **Israel's greatest salvation event.**

The text also notes that Israel went out **“equipped for battle.”** It is possible that they went out with many weapons, but they would not have possessed weapons and we have no indication the Egyptians gave them weapons. The Hebrew word literally means in battle array. It is likely referring to the fact they went out in organized columns like an army.

Chuck Missler in his comments on this word and says it means *“columns of five.”*

The term **“Red Sea”** (Hebrew: *Yam Suph*) refers to the body of water Israel would cross. Its exact location is debated, but the point is clear: God led them toward an impossible situation—so He could demonstrate His power.

We will talk about **evidence** related to the **Red Sea** either at the end of this lesson or in a coming lesson. We will review the evidence of where the Red Sea is located.

*Vs 19 Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for Joseph had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones with you from here."*

This verse records a remarkable act of faithfulness. Moses honored the oath made generations earlier when **Joseph** (Gen 50:25).

Joseph's request was rooted in **unshakable confidence in God's promise** to bring Israel out of Egypt and into the land sworn to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. By insisting his bones not remain in Egypt, Joseph testified that his ultimate hope was in God's covenant, not in Egypt's wealth or power.

The New Testament in the book of Hebrews comments on what Joseph was thinking (Heb 11:22).

**Historical Note:** Joseph's burial in Canaan was eventually fulfilled in **Joshua 24:32**, when his bones were laid to rest at Shechem. This continuity underscores God's faithfulness across generations (Josh 24:32).



**APPLICATION:** Joseph's example challenges us to **live and die with confidence in God's promises**. Like him, we may not see the full realization of God's plan in our lifetime, but we trust His word. Our hope is not in earthly security but in the eternal inheritance secured by Christ.

*Vs 20 And they moved on from Succoth and encamped at Etham, on the edge of the wilderness.*

After leaving Succoth, Israel encamped at Etham, described as being **"on the edge of the wilderness."** While the exact location of Etham is uncertain, its placement marks a significant transition: Israel is leaving the settled regions of Egypt and approaching the **desolate wilderness**. This movement underscores that their journey is not simply geographical—it is spiritual. They are moving from slavery toward freedom, from **dependence on Egypt** toward **dependence on God**.

**APPLICATION:** As I consider this or journey is much like theirs. From trusting in our own abilities to trusting in God alone.

The text does not specify how long they stayed at Succoth, but the emphasis is on **God's leadership**.

**Succoth** likely served as a **staging area** for the initial departure, while Etham positioned Israel near the wilderness and the route toward the Red Sea.

This verse reminds us that God leads His people to the edge of the unknown. Etham represents a threshold—a place where **faith must replace familiarity**. Israel is leaving behind the **security of Egypt** for the **uncertainty of the wilderness**, but they are not alone. **God's presence will guide them** (Exodus 13:21–22).

**APPLICATION:** God often brings us to "Etham moments"—places where the next step requires trust. We may not know what lies ahead, but we know Who leads us. Our security is not in the terrain but in the Shepherd who guides our path (cf. Psalm 23:1–4).

*Vs 21 And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night.*

Yahweh went before them **during the day** as a **pillar of cloud** to guide their path, and by night as a **pillar of fire** to provide light. This allowed them to travel both day and night.

Adam Clarke commented: ***"This was the Shechinah or Divine dwelling place, and was the continual proof of the presence and protection of GOD."***

*Vs 22 The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.*

The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night **never left them**. One was **always present**, always **leading the people**. Yahweh was with them continually.

Now this cloud was real, but like almost everything in the Old Testament it represented a New Testament Truth. You are going to help me figure this out, so let's look at what we know about the pillar of cloud:

- Cloud was their guide to lead them (Ex 13:21).
- Cloud was their covering (Ps 105:39).
- God spoke to Israel from the cloud (Ps 99:7) (Num 12:5).
- Once the tabernacle was completed, the cloud filled the tabernacle (Ex 40:34).
- Finally, as we just read, God did not take the cloud away, it was with them all the way to the Promised land (Ex 13:22).



**What does it seem like the cloud represents?**

***14:1-2 Then the LORD said to Moses, 2 "Tell the people of Israel to turn back and encamp in front of Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, in front of Baal-zephon; you shall encamp facing it, by the sea.***

As they traveled, the Lord instructed them to turn back and camp in front of Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea. This place, Pi-hahiroth is mentioned four times in the Hebrew Bible, each time it is referring to this place. The best translation of this name is ***"mouth of the gorges."***

This place was located between Migdol and the sea (the Red Sea). Migdol means tower or fortress, and it is suspected that this was an Egyptian fortress. We will discuss actual location, Lord willing, next week.

Baal-zephon is the **"Lord of the north."** Pi-hahiroth is in front of, in the face of, in the presence of Baal-zephon. It is used three times in the Hebrew Bible, always in reference to this place.

Suddenly, the size of Israel becomes a major factor—they would need a **vast area to gather and camp together**. But why would God direct them to turn back and position themselves against the Red Sea?

**Why place the nation of Israel in what appears to be a vulnerable spot?**

***Vs 3 For Pharaoh will say of the people of Israel, 'They are wandering in the land; the wilderness has shut them in.'***

**Yahweh explains His reasoning to Moses:** word will reach Pharaoh that the Israelites appear to be wandering aimlessly, like lost sheep in the wilderness. From Pharaoh's perspective, the terrain has trapped them—they are now at easy target for his army.

This is another requirement for the Red Sea location: a large place for Israel to camp, facing the Red Sea, and from Pharaoh's vantage point, they would seem completely shut in and vulnerable.

***Vs 4 And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, and the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD." And they did so.***

Notice the order: Pharaoh will first purpose in his heart to pursue Israel, and **then Yahweh will harden his heart so that he follows through**. At the end of the day, we see the grand purpose, that **Yahweh will receive glory over Pharaoh and his entire army**.

The phrase ***"and they did so"*** likely refers to the **Egyptians**—they acted exactly as Yahweh declared they would. The Lord is setting one final trap for Pharaoh—a trap designed for His glory. Pharaoh expects to bring Israel back into slavery, but instead, the trap will cost him his army.

***Vs 5 When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the mind of Pharaoh and his servants was changed toward the people, and they said, "What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?"***

Word reaches Pharaoh that the Israelites have fled Egypt. At this point, the hearts of Pharaoh and his officials change. The sting of losing all the firstborn has begun to fade, and now the reality of losing their entire labor force hits hard. Six hundred thousand men, plus women this is a significant loss!

The Egyptians begin to question their decision: ***“What have we done? How could we let Israel go from serving us?”*** The weight of this loss starts to sink in—every Israelite servant is gone, and Egypt’s economy and workforce are suddenly crippled.

It is funny, we could give Pharaoh ten good reasons why he let Israel go. But the reality and the significant impact this will have on their economy is likely beginning to sink in, and Pharaoh hardened his heart, and God hardened Pharaoh’s heart!

***Vs 6-7 So he made ready his chariot and took his army with him, 7 and took six hundred chosen chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them.***

At this point, Pharaoh commands his forces to prepare for pursuit. He readies his own chariot, mobilizes his army, and selects **600 elite chariots**, along with **all the other chariots of Egypt**, under command of officers.

Moses emphasizes the scale: Pharaoh didn’t just take a few chariots—he took the best of the best, plus every other chariot available.

This was a massive military response. While Scripture doesn’t give the exact size of the army, we can reasonably assume it was enormous, likely numbering in the hundreds of thousands, including chariots and foot soldiers. The mission? To bring the runaway slaves back to Egypt—by force.

***Vs 8 And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the people of Israel while the people of Israel were going out defiantly.***

Once again, we read that Yahweh hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and Pharaoh pursued the Israelites as they left Egypt defiantly.

In the Hebrew, the phrase literally says they went out with a **“high hand”**—a vivid expression of confidence and boldness. The translation ***“defiantly”*** captures the sense well: they departed not as fugitives, but as a people **delivered** by the **power of God**.

***Vs 9 The Egyptians pursued them, all Pharaoh’s horses and chariots and his horsemen and his army, and overtook them encamped at the sea, by Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon.***

The Egyptians pursued them—Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, his horsemen, and his entire army. The Egyptians, overtook Israel as they were encamped by the sea, hemmed in by the rugged terrain at Pi-hahiroth, opposite or in front of Baal-zephon, facing the Red Sea.

It is here we must **leave the nation, encamped by the sea** and now Pharaoh with his massive army, horsemen, and chariots overtake the Israelites!

We can imagine the **great fear** that struck the hearts of **many of the Hebrews**. Lord willing, we will pick back up here next week!

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