

## Be Still

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Before you begin today's devotional, read Exodus 14.

In Exodus 14, the Israelites were released from Pharaoh's slavery in Egypt. The Israelites were in slavery for hundreds of years. They begged and pleaded with the Lord to free them and finally God sent Moses to rescue them. To help Moses, God sent 10 plagues to wear Pharaoh down so He could free the Israelites. After the last plague, Pharaoh reluctantly told Moses to take the Israelites from Egypt. They were finally free! Moses led the Israelites from Egypt. On their journey out, God spoke to Moses. The Lord told them to turn back and go towards Egypt. Wait? What? Why?! After they were finally set free, the Lord wants them to turn back. Not only did the Lord tell them to turn back and go to Egypt but He warned Moses that He was going to harden Pharaoh's heart. This meant Pharaoh was going to be full of rage and hatred.

I don't know about you but I would be doubting God at this point. Put yourself in the Israelite's shoes for one moment. You were finally freed and you are no longer a slave in a foreign land. You were able to flee the land that held you and your family captive. But now God is telling you to turn back to that land and He's warned you that your enemy's army will be waiting. God tells his people that He is in control. He tells his people that He wants the whole world to know that He is in control. If you're an Israelite, you're helpless. You have no army to defend yourself. The Egyptians are on their way to recapture or even kill you. You're in a position that forces you to rely on God. At this moment, He is truly you're only hope.

The verses that stick out to me in this chapter are verses 13 and 14. “But Moses told the people, “Don’t be afraid. Just *stand still* and watch the Lord rescue you today. The Egyptians you see today will never be seen again. The Lord himself will fight for you. Just stay calm.”

“Don’t be afraid.”

“Just stand still... watch the Lord rescue you today.”

“Just stay calm.”

This is not a situation that any of the Israelites would have chosen. Only days ago they were freed from a lifetime of slavery. Just when their hopes were high, they realized the enemy’s army is coming back for them and now God is telling them to walk towards that very army. God is purposefully taking them back into a situation where they have no choice but to trust Him.

I think it is interesting to compare this passage to the season that we are in today. Not many of us would have chosen COVID-19 to take over our nation and even our world. Not many of us would have chosen to be pulled away from our friends, our vacations, our sports, our social lives, the things in which our identity lies. We like having a sense of control. But right now we are very much in a season where no one has control. Our God is literally the only one who has control right now. I have been in awe that God has chosen something like this virus to teach each of us different lessons. I don’t know what you are going through right now. I don’t know what your life looked like before all of this happened. Maybe you thought your life was great. Maybe there were some things that you wanted to change but who really has the time? Our schedules are packed full. Our lives are go, go, go all the time and for some reason that feels good to us. But

God has chosen to press PAUSE and stop you right where you are. There is a quote by Paul David Tripp that has stood out to me during this season.

“God, in His love, writes a better story than we could ever write for ourselves. He has a better dream than the one we conceive. He knows much better than we do what is best for us. He will take us places that we never intended to go in order to produce in us what we could not achieve on our own.”

Why has God brought you specifically into this season? What is He trying to teach you that you could not have learned otherwise? In our normal, busy lives we rarely have time to sit and be still. We worry, we're anxious, we're stressed, and we're exhausted. In this season, will you sit still and watch the Lord fight for you? He has given you the opportunity to sit and turn off the “noise” that is typically consuming you. God loves you more than you could ever imagine and yet we are in this constant sprint looking for love and acceptance through so many other things the world is throwing at us. God, in His grace, has turned these things off right now. Will you take advantage of it? Will you turn the noise off around you to hear what He is trying to tell you?

Psalm 37:7 says “*Be still* in the presence of the Lord and wait patiently for Him to act.” Psalm 46:10 says “*Be still* and know that I am God.” I challenge you today to be grateful for this season. The Israelites probably did not feel grateful to be turning back to a large army coming to attack. But they got to see the Lord fight for them and rescue them in ways they would have not been able to see otherwise.

Reflection Questions:

1. Why do you think God has brought you specifically into this season?
2. What is He trying to teach you that you could not have learned in your typical, busy schedule?
3. Why is it hard for you to sit still and let the Lord rescue you from situations that you long to be freed from?
4. Does it scare you to be alone with God and hear what He has for you? If so, why?