**The Lord our Defender (Exodus 14:10-14)**

 In your most difficult moment, hear the voice of the Lord that says to you, “Be silent, The Lord will fight on your behalf.” Many people do not think of the Lord as our Protector as He was for the people of Israel in the Old Testament. Today’s passage will inspire us to boldly follow the Lord’s commands, even if the road that we wind up on is not very enjoyable despite our obedience. Therefore, let us see the Lord’s protection in the book of Exodus, and let us also notice that very same reality within our personal lives, both as individuals and as part of the Armenian nation.

 The Lord is your Protector in all circumstances, even if you find yourself in danger of death. The people of God had walked many long days in the desert and before they finally arrived at the seashore, which was the result of their obedience to Moses, the man of God. It would have been easier for them to stay in Egypt, in their comfort zones, serving the Egyptians and remaining oppressed slaves. But God loved them so much that he wanted to show them that yet another side of his loving and holy nature. If they had not followed God’s lead because they had reasoned that they were going down a one-way path that was going to lead to their death, they would have had neither a testimony nor the first-hand knowledge of the power of God by which He was protecting and leading them. God had prepared that dead-end *on purpose* so that His own people would know Him and respect Him more, and so that the respect would also be transferred to his servant Moses and his messages.

 The two most famous legions in the Roman army were the Tenth Legion and the Thundering Legion. The Tenth Legion was composed of Caesar's veteran shock troops. In every great emergency it was upon that legion that he called, and it never failed him. The Thundering Legion was the name given to the Militine Legion, which guarded Melitene, or Malatya, in Armenian, as well as the Euphrates River in the days of the philosopher emperor—one of the worst persecutors of the Church—Marcus Aurelius.

The historian Tertullian tells us how the legion won that name, the "Thundering Legion." In A.D. 176 the army of the emperor was engaged in a campaign against the Germans. In their march the Romans found themselves encircled by dangerously steep mountains which were occupied by their savage enemies. In addition to the danger the army was tormented by thirst because of the drought. It was then that the commander of the Praetorian Guard informed the emperor that the Militine Legion was made up of Christians, and that they believed in the power of prayer.

"Let them pray, then," said the emperor. The soldiers of the Legion then bowed on the ground and earnestly besought God in the name of Christ to deliver the Roman army. They had scarcely risen from their knees when the great thunderstorm arose, accompanied by hail. The storm drove the barbarians out of their strongholds; and, descending from the mountains, they entreated the Romans for mercy. His army delivered from death at the hands of the barbarians, and delivered from death by the drought, the emperor decreed that this legion should be thereafter called the "Thundering Legion." He also abated somewhat his persecution of the Christians.

 And what of us? Which Red Sea do we find ourselves in front of today? Yes, it is true that Artsakh and Armenia also find themselves there as well. Sometimes, God purposely allows hardships to spur us to need him, his grace and presence. We might say, “we’re only human”, or “we’re just people and we’re weak”. And we keep on struggling, over and over again, until our strength gives way and then we cry out to God, saying, “Lord, where are you?” Gods answer to our cry often comes after prayer, when every person unites and devotes time to Him, to beseech Him for mercy and rescue.

Today the word of God comes to us saying that our Lord is our Defender in all circumstances, even when we find ourselves facing death.

Therefore, let us remember the Lord every moment as our Protector – who will not ignore the nation that calls on Him for help. Let us remember him as the One who fights for us, and the one who annihilates every obstacle and enemy to His will being accomplished in us, so that we can live and be firmly rooted and strengthen in our Christ-centered lives.

In your most difficult moment, hear the voice of the Lord that says to you, “Be silent, The Lord will fight on your behalf.”

 “Be silent, The Lord will fight on your behalf.” The Lord Bless you all. Amen.