

We are far enough along in the Big Ten Season that some teams are wondering how to save their season and some coaches may be wondering how to save their jobs. But coaches aren't the only ones that need to be saved. Sometimes we find ourselves in situations and have to ask, "Who's going to save me?" The answer is not always obvious.

Kids have played a game for a long time to try to settle a dispute. It is called "rock, paper, scissors." The rules are simple. Pound your first three times onto the palm of your hand and make the symbol for one the third strike. Rocks blunt scissors, scissors cut paper, and paper covers rock. It may work in a game or to help make a simple decision, but you can't count on it to solve a serious problem or rescue you in a tough situation.

What do you do when the going gets to tough to face by yourself? Through a very interesting and twisted series of events, Joseph became the second most powerful person in Egypt and was placed in charge of storing enough food during seven years of bumper crops to feed the nation during the seven years of drought that followed. Joseph's father, Jacob, moved his family to Egypt during the drought so that they could get food from Joseph. After the drought was over, Jacob's family stayed in Egypt. Eventually they grew into such a large group that the Pharaoh became afraid of them and decided to enslave them. Then Pharaoh decided to kill the male babies born to the Israelites to hold their population down. That's when the Israelites cried out to God for help. Why is it that we have to wait until things get bad before we turn to God for help?

God heard their cries, remembered the promises He had given to Abraham and his descendents, and sent an unlikely hero. At one time this hero had been a rising star on the wrong team. He was a hot head who killed a man and ran away so that he wouldn't get caught and have to face justice. He settled down in the desert as a nomadic shepherd and started a family of his own. Little did he know that God was preparing him the whole time to rescue His people from slavery.

One day this fugitive from justice saw something he had never seen before, a burning bush that didn't burn up. His curiosity got the best of him so went to check it out. While he was approaching the bush he heard a voice say to him, "***Do not come any closer. Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground.***" (Exodus 2:5 NLT) It was the voice of God and the man was afraid. Wouldn't you be if you were in hiding for something wrong you had done and God all of a sudden started talking with you in the middle of the day? Then God said, "***I have certainly seen the oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their cries of distress because of their harsh slave drivers. Yes, I am aware of their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them.***" (Ex. 2:7-8 NLT) That was good news until God said, "***Now go, for I am sending you to Pharaoh. You must lead my people Israel out of Egypt.***" (Verse 10 NLT)

God was talking to Moses. Despite his objections, from that moment on Moses was on a mission for God. God was going to rescue His people by sending Moses with the promise that He would be with him all the way. But it wasn't easy because Pharaoh wasn't about to let his slave work

force go free. So instead of giving them freedom, he demanded more from them. Their lives went from bad to worse, so they complained. Moses felt helpless and realized that he couldn't save the people by himself. That's when God said to Moses, ***“Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh. When he feels the force of my strong hand, he will let the people go. In fact, he will force them to leave his land!”*** (Ex. 6:1 NLT) Then God unleashed His own Big Ten Plagues on the Egyptians until finally Pharaoh agreed to let the Israelites go.

But that didn't stop Pharaoh from changing his mind and sending his army to capture the slave nation and bring them back to Egypt. But God was with Moses and his people. Moses had learned to trust God and told the people, ***“Don't be afraid. Just stand still and watch the Lord rescue you today.”*** (Ex. 14:13 NLT) Then God prevented the Egyptians from seeing what was happening, sent a strong wind to push the waters of the Red Sea off to the sides and allowed the Israelites to cross on dry ground. Then the winds stopped and the waters of the Red Sea prevented the Egyptian army from capturing the runaway slaves. God rescued His people, just as he said he would.

God sent Moses to rescue His people from slavery in Egypt. God sent His Son to rescue His people from slavery to sin. Sin has a way of taking control over our lives. It influences our decisions, shapes our environment, and limits our freedoms. Romans 6:19 (NLT) tells us, ***“Previously you let yourselves be slaves to impurity and lawlessness, which led ever deeper into sin.”*** Like the Israelites in Egypt, we need someone to save us. Like the Israelites, we cry out to God for help. We can't save ourselves. It just doesn't work.

God has heard our cry and sent another unlikely person to rescue us. This time God sent His Son. Jesus is God with us to save us. He is God's answer to our prayers. He fought the ultimate battle on the cross to defeat sin, death and the devil for us. He won the victory that we could not win and sets us free to live the new life of faith. Moses led the Israelites to the Promise Land. Jesus shows us the way to God's Kingdom. But that is not all. Jesus promises to be with us always. He encourages us to bring all of our cares and concerns to Him and promises that He will not only hear, but will answer us. He will help us face the problems of life. He has already set us free from slavery to sin and made us His own.

Jesus is the Rock of our Salvation who covers us with His love and cuts the cords of sin and death that enslave us. Jesus has defeated sin, death and Satan. We are forgiven and free in Christ. But that is not all. Romans 8:31-32 (NLT) tells us, ***“If God is for us, who can ever be against us? Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else?”*** God is ready to help us face anything that life can throw at us. He is the one who saves us. Take some time this week to think about all of the good things God has done in your life lately. You might just be surprised how many times God has heard you, answered your prayer, rescued you and given you hope and life. Amen.