

## Exodus 14:21,22

### THROUGH THE SEA ON DRY GROUND

- I. The idea is that the church as a kingdom or fortress with walls and gates.
  - A. The “keys” are the authority and power to determine what shall have a place within the walls of the church.
  - B. This idea pictures the Church as a city with watchmen appointed watchmen are to warn the inhabitants of the enemies without and within.
  - C. In the history of the church there are various forms of church government. Ours is presbyterian.
- II. Who exercises the keys? Who are the guardians of the Church?
  - A. Centrally and essentially this authority and ability belongs only to Christ (Rev. 1:18; 3:7,8).
  - B. Christ exercises the keys through the instrumentality of the Apostles and the elders (Matt. 18:18; John 20:23; Heb. 13:17).
    1. Consider the names given to the ruling parties: overseer, elder.
    2. Consider their instruction to rebuke sinners (I Cor. 5:7; I Thess. 5:14; I Tim. 5:20; Titus 3:10; II Thess. 3:6,14,15).
    3. Consider the call to submit to them (Heb. 13:17; I Thess. 5:12,13; I Tim. 5:17; Phil. 2:29).
  - C. The keys exercise a spiritual (not a physical) power by pronouncing what the Bible teaches.
    1. Elders have Christ's promise that He will work through them, when they teach, maintain and enforce the Bible.
    2. God alone forgives and condemns, but the church has the right to make declaration of who is and is not forgiven.
- III. There are three purposes for the exercise of the keys of the kingdom of heaven?
  - A. The glory of God.
  - B. The well-being of the church.
  - C. The salvation and spiritual well-being of the believer.
  - D. Conclusion.