

I Am The Lord Your God

Parashah Bo – Sh'mot (Exo.) 10:1-13:16, Yirmeyahu (Jerm.) 46:13-28
By Kevin Phipps

This week we have read about the last of the ten plagues on Egypt, which concluded with the death of the firstborn of Egypt and the Passover. It is easy to recognize the familiar stories in a passage and not see the greater truths behind such stories. With Passover around the corner, I will leave teaching directly about Passover for Passover, and this week give you “the rest of the story”.

Passover is the culmination of a battle between God and the forces of darkness presiding in Egypt at the time. The lines are drawn in this spiritual battle and for the most part, Egypt is on the one side and Israel is on the other. We see God engaged in battle, not only for His own glory, but for His people’s deliverance from bondage. God proves Himself to be more powerful than the magicians of Pharaoh, as well as in control of natural forces, human health, and even life itself.

As we celebrate Passover, we are reminded of what God did and the deliverance from bondage Israel experienced, but how often do we consider why? Why did God go to such powerful and miraculous ways to get His people out of Egypt? In some ways it gave Pharaoh and the rest of Egypt many chances to acknowledge the reality and power of God and turn to Him for deliverance. In other ways it gave God a chance to prove His authority over the various gods of Egypt. These, however, are benefits, not reasons.

For the reason, we must peek ahead to the Commandments God gives to Israel in the wilderness. The first of these commandments is as follows, “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt where you were slaves.” (Ex.20:2) Here, God declares to Israel who He is, His relationship to them, and what He has done for them. To do this, He brings them back to their time in Egypt and the deliverance He gave to them through the Passover and Exodus. This is because that is when God proved such things to Israel, as well as Egypt and the rest of the world. God could have made Israel a mighty army, under the leadership of Moses, but on the night of Passover, it was not Israel who smote the firstborn, it was solely God. Pharaoh let the people go, not out of fear of Israel, but out of fear of God. His firstborn son was dead. Would he be next if he continued in his rebellion? His fear of the God of Israel made him not want to find out. So he and the rest of Egypt sent Israel on their way as a nation victorious over them, taking with them all the wealth of Egypt, yet they never swung a single sword or shot a single arrow.

Pharaoh earlier feared the growing size of the Hebrews, when he should have feared the God of the Hebrews. It did not matter whether he had one Hebrew in his land or one million, it was not the Hebrews he had to contend with, but their God. “Let Lucifer choose his way; God is a match for him at every weapon. If he assaults the saint by persecution, God will oppose him. If he works by subtlety, God is ready there also. The devil and his whole council are mere fools to God. The more wit and craft in sin, the worse, because it is employed against an all-wise God who cannot be outwitted....By displaying His wisdom in pursuing the saint’s enemies, God adds a sweet

relish to their ultimate deliverance. After He had hunted Pharaoh out of all his lairs and burrows, He broke the very brains of that wicked ruler's plots and served them up to his people, garnished with His wisdom and power." (Christian in Complete Armour, William Gurnall, v.1, p.116)

HaSatan can assemble whatever army he chooses against God's people, and it is all for naught.

"On this same stage God spreads out the panoply of His wisdom, and lets you watch while He reduces all the wit and wiles of Satan to utter foolishness. God will be admired by His saints in glory not only for His love and faithfulness in their salvation, but also for His wisdom in the way to it. Wisdom is the attribute man admires above all others, and the one Satan chose as his first bait, when he made Eve believe she could be like God in knowledge and wisdom. Therefore God, to give Satan the more shameful fall, lets him use all his cunning in tempting and troubling the saints. But in the end the way to His throne, where His wisdom as well as His mercy shall sit in state, will be paved with the skulls, as I may so speak, of devils.

...Gather round and watch the all-wise God joust with His crafty opponent. You shall behold the Almighty smite off this Goliath's head with his own sword, and take this wicked knight in the trap of his own schemes. That faith which ascribes greatness and wisdom to God will shrink up Satan's challenge into a thing of nothing. Unbelief fears Satan as a lion; faith treads upon him as a worm." (Gurnall, p.122)

It was God's desire to instill His reality and power as deep into the hearts and minds of His people while they were still in Egypt, because the road to the Promised Land would be wrought with trials and tribulations. It would not be long before they would be between the Sea of Reeds and the army of Pharaoh. It would not be long after that when Israel would be in the wilderness with no food or water in sight. They would later be given the Laws of God and expected to forever change the way they lived their lives. Fear would envelop them as they would hear reports of giants living in the land flowing with milk and honey. In all these trials, their faith in God would be tested. Many would complain, and many would turn to gods of their own design, but yet they would remain the people of God, and ultimately their faith would prevail. In their darkest moments, God would bring them back to Egypt and remind them, "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt where you were slaves." If He could do that for them, he could do anything for them. All they would need to do is trust and obey and leave everything else to God.

As the people of God today, the battle between God and the forces of darkness rages on. We may have never experienced an event as dramatic as the ten plagues and Passover, but God has delivered each of us from some sort of bondage, hardship, or distress. Where would we be without God intervening in certain events of our lives? In the darkest times of our lives, when Ha Satan assembles his armies against us, we need to remember that God is the Lord our God. The battle is his not ours. Through trust in Him, we can laugh at tribulation and say, "I am a child of God! I have been bought with the blood of His Son. Today, you come not against me, but against the God of Israel. Today you, not I, will be defeated in shame!" Just be sure, when the battle lines are drawn that

through unbelief you don't find yourself on the wrong side of that line.

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand **(Eph.6:12-13)**