

Delivered From the Old Life

Bible Selection: Exodus 13:21 - 14:31

Just as the Israelites had been surreptitiously enslaved in a foreign land and forced to serve a tyrant king, so today men and women have been furtively taken captive by Satan and made to conform to his evil schemes and live by his unholy standards.

Israel was redeemed by the Passover Lamb from the plague of death, and took flight under instruction by Moses. They stopped just long enough to eat their Passover bread, then circling past Egypt's northern border, doubled back to the west of the Red Sea to Pi-hahiroth, thought to be south of Suez (Moses identified it to contemporary readers as being near other cities). Hemmed in by mountains and the sea they were trapped, easy pickings for Pharaoh's army.

God's Passover Lamb is Jesus. He is the One who redeems us from the sentence of death. When the angel of death looks upon His blood, he turns away. Our life is redeemed. But God's plan is greater than that we should be saved from a death sentence. He wants to fit us to be His children and bring us into the Kingdom of His dear Son. Events on their redemption route were to teach them to trust in God; so also our pilgrimage prepares us to live the life of faith, for 'without faith it is impossible to please Him.'

Their lessons are ours also It is wise for us to learn them and learn them well.

The Pillar of Fire and Cloud was for them the presence of God in their midst. So we too, dear pilgrim do not want for His presence. Think long on this precious thought. His promise 'I am with you always, even to the end of the age,' is for you too. Depend on it.

When we examine the references to the fiery pillar, we learn what the presence of the Lord in our midst means to us. When He is evident in our midst:

He is with us night and day Exodus 13:22
He lights our way and directs our steps
Exodus 13:21
He stands between us and our enemies
Exodus 14:19

He shares our problems and needs Exodus 14:24
He is our Great High Priest before God
Exodus 33:9, Deuteronomy 31:14
He causes believers to worship Exodus 33:10
He makes the watching world stand in awe
Numbers 4:14.

Who is He, this God who presences Himself with His people? In the Hebrew, h/™:hy" or *YHWH*, or Yehweh, also Jehovah, or simply, 'the Lord', written in many Bibles as 'LORD' to distinguish the name. John called Him 'the Word.'

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1:1.

This One John identified as Jesus. He is the Old Testament God of covenant, of revelation, the One whom we can see. Jesus was the One who went with them in all the events and issues of their journey, as He does with us. See First Corinthians 10:4.

Therefore practice the presence of God, day by day. See the difference in your life.

Why Did God Take Them on a Roundabout Route and Into a Trap?

Why did God do it the hard way? Nothing natural is too hard for God:

Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me? Jeremiah 32:27.

God planned to do something in the hearts of Moses and the people. He led them into uncertainty in order to teach them to trust Him, because faith is the basis of all

relationship and blessing with God.

What God cannot do is work in an unbelieving heart:

And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief. Matthew 13:58.

Thus it is that God works 'on' people before He can work 'in' people. This is true for the unregenerate to bring them to redemption and for the believer to bring them to blessing. The prayer of Paul:

...having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, Ephesians 1:18

This is the way of God.

Confidence in Circumstances will Get you into Trouble. Look at:

The LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he chased after the sons of Israel as the sons of Israel were going out boldly. Exodus 14:8.

What a day it had been. How exciting to be delivered from slavery, the Passover, the journey, the cloud, a charismatic leader. Nothing can stop us now. Suddenly it all collapsed. The sea before them and mountains to the west hemming them in. Pharaoh behind with hundreds of chariots. Look at their wail to Moses, vs10-12. Had not God promised to take them to Canaan? Why did they not trust Him?

Moses stilled their hearts and then called on God. What faith! No! Look at v14:

Why are you crying out to me? Tell the sons of Israel to go forward.

Had not God already told Moses what He was going to do. See Exodus 3:7-12. God was in process of doing that, and Moses was not trusting Him. Trusting God is believing what He says He will do and acting on it.

(But be careful that it is God who says it, and not somebody else)

It is only when we *act* in faith on what God says that we see His miracles.

God Had a Miracle Waiting to Happen.

He had prepared before He created the universe, to open the Red Sea, deliver His people and bury their enemies. He had to get them both to the right place at the appointed time in order for that to happen.

This is true of all that God does in and for His people. Answers to your prayer of faith have been planned in eternity and prepared during creation and are just waiting for you to receive them in the appointed way and time.

Through the Waters. The Red Sea experience stands where baptism stands in the life of the believer today. It stands between the old life (Egypt and slavery to a tyrant king) and the promised land, at the beginning of our pilgrimage.

The Israelis never tired of singing about this deliverance, and deliverance it was, for they were never taken captive by Egypt again. See Exodus 15:21, Psalm 106:7-12, Isaiah 43:16&17 etc. Baptism is this for us.

In baptism we symbolically leave the old life and enter into the crucified life, we lose our 'tyrant' and service to sin then rise from the waters to a new life in Christ. It is an ordinance, a milestone and a memorial to the transformation that has happened.

Bible quotations in this study are from the NASB.

Welcome **Glen Park Gospel Church**
Lower Road, Eltham North
Sundays 10.30 am

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