

Sunday - January 22, 2017

Preparation

In this week of our pursuit of Christ, we will see Christ pictured through Moses as our Redeemer and Provider, our Rock and Sacrificial Lamb. We will see God's power displayed as never before as well as His wrath poured out upon those who reject Him. We will see God's blessings bestowed upon His people as provided by their enemies. We will see God answer prayers as well as His discipline upon those who chose to do wrong. We will also read of God giving the Ten Commandments to Moses upon which all of the law is built so that everyone might know that "...all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23) These are just a few things we have to look forward to as we prepare ourselves for this week's pursuit of a better understanding of God's word, leading to a deeper relationship with our Saviour.

As we prepare for the week, let's remember God seeks to have "true worshippers" that "worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24). Therefore, let's consider our mindset and heart of worship, not only in our Sunday service, but through the entire week. Let's give glory and honour to Him who came to earth for us, that we might have life, and have it more abundantly (John 10:10) as He alone is worthy! Let's worship Him, as we learn of Him through the preaching of the word of God, by thanking Him for the lesson given from the scripture. When we consider all that God has given to us by offering His "only begotten Son" (the Word of God), and then providing us with the Bible (the word of God), we can only act upon what the Bible records in Luke 12:48, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." We have truly been given much and should live our lives reflective of such.

Monday - January 23, 2017

TODAY'S READING: EXODUS 5-9

OVERVIEW:

Moses and Aaron go before Pharaoh; the first seven of the 10 plagues.

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

Seven times God says to Pharaoh, "*Let my people go, that they may serve me*" (Ex. 5:1; 7:16; 8:1, 20; 9:1, 13; 10:3). God's purpose in delivering Israel out of the bondage of Egypt was for Him, not for them! Likewise, God's purpose in delivering us out of the bondage of Egypt (sin/world) was not so we could live comfortable and happy lives. He saved us for His purposes and pleasure (Eph. 2:10, Rev. 4:11).

The ten plagues of Egypt had a fourfold purpose:

1. They were signs to Israel, assuring them of God's power and care (Ex. 7:3, 1 Cor. 1:22).
2. They were judgments upon Egypt and its ruler Pharaoh for persecuting Israel.
3. They were prophecies of judgments that will come upon this world and Satan when Moses reappears on this planet during the tribulation period (Rev. 16).
4. To show the people of Egypt God's superiority over their gods.
 - The 1st plague of bloody waters was directed against the Egyptian god, Osiris, the god of the Nile. (Ex. 7:20)
 - The 2nd plague of the frogs was directed against Hekt, the Egyptian frog goddess. (Ex. 8:6)
 - The 3rd plague of lice was directed against the Egyptian god, Seb, the earth god. (Ex. 8:17)
 - The 4th plague of flies was directed against the Egyptian goddess, Hatkok, the wife of Osiris. (Ex. 8:24)
 - The 5th plague of cattle disease was directed against the Egyptian god, Apis, the sacred bull god. (Ex. 9:6)
 - The 6th plague of boils was directed against the Egyptian god, Typhon. (Ex.

9:10)

- The 7th plague, hail with fire, was directed against the Egyptian god Shu, the god of the atmosphere.
- The 8th plague of locusts was directed against Serapia, the god who supposedly protected Egypt against locusts.
- The 9th plague, darkness, was directed against the Egyptian god, Ra, the sun god.
- The 10th plague, the death of the firstborn, was directed against all gods.
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Notice Pharaoh's (Satan's) response to God's command to let his people go in Exodus 5:1. *"Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice?"* (Ex. 5:2). Keep in mind that the world and Satan have no respect for God's Word; it is *"vain"* to them (5:9). Sinners either yield to God's Word, or resist it and become hardened (Ex. 7:14, Heb. 3:13).

Note that God says that His purpose in allowing Pharaoh to oppress Israel was so that His power and glory might be known to the world (Ex. 6:7; 7:5, 17; 8:10, 22). Today, God desires to reveal His power and glory through His church (Eph. 3:10)! That is why God allows us to be oppressed (suffer persecution – II Tim. 3:12). Just as with Israel it is so that God's power and glory might be known to the world! Our response to persecution and suffering will determine whether or not we will fulfill God's purposes in allowing it (1 Peter 2:19-23, Phil. 1:28-29).

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As the REDEEMER from the bondage of sin – Ex. 6:6 (Rom. 6:14; Gal. 3:13; I Pet. 1:18-25)

Tuesday – January 24, 2017

TODAY'S READING: EXODUS 10-13

OVERVIEW:

The last three of the 10 plagues including the death of the firstborn; the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread instituted by God as a memorial feast.

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

God's desire in delivering His people up out of the bondage of Egypt was to totally separate us as a people unto Himself. In II Cor. 6:14-18, God lets us know that He wants us to make absolutely no compromises with the world and/or the devil. It is interesting to note the four compromises Pharaoh (a picture of Satan) offered to Moses and the people of Israel (the individual believer in Christ) in the midst of the 10 plagues. They are the same compromises Satan will be seeking to cause you and me to make as we continue our pilgrimage with Christ.

1. Worship God, but stay in Egypt (Ex. 8:25-27) – God demands complete separation from the world because friendship with the world is enmity with God (James 4:4). Satan doesn't mind if you are double-minded, but God most certainly does! (II Cor. 6:14-18; James 1:8; 4:8)
2. Leave, but don't go too far away (Ex. 8:28) – Satan says, *"Sure, do the 'God thing,' but you don't have to be a fanatic. Give God a place in your heart, but don't go overboard with it!"* God says, *"If I'm God, follow me alone. If anything else is god, then follow it. But don't think that you can do both!"* (I Kings 18:21). The fact is, you can't be close to God and close to the world at the same time. Jesus said it is an impossibility (Matt. 6:24)! He also said it makes Him sick (Rev. 3:5-16)!
3. Leave, but allow your children to remain in Egypt. (Ex.10:7-11) – Satan will let men think they're doing well spiritually, if in so doing, he can take captive the next generation. Men have been called to lead their families to worship God and God alone. (I Tim. 3:4-5; Titus 1:6).
4. Leave, but keep your possessions in Egypt (Ex. 10:24-26) – Satan wants you to think that your relationship to God and your relationship to your money and possessions are two different things. They simply are not! Jesus said in the Book of Matthew, *"You cannot serve God and mammon*

(money), (6:24) and *“where your treasure is, there will your heart be also”* (6:21). If you are thinking that you’re walking in the perfect will of God for your life, but your treasure is in Egypt (the world), you have been duped!

In order to avoid the death of the firstborn plague, the people of Israel had to kill a spotless lamb and apply the blood to the doorposts of their house. When God saw the blood, He passed over that house and did not kill the firstborn. In the same way, God rejects our first birth and requires that we be *“born again”* (John 3:3) by the blood of the spotless Lamb of God (1 Peter 1:18-19).

Note the progression concerning the lamb in Exodus 12:3-5. It is *“A lamb,” then “the lamb,”* then *“your lamb.”* The practical implications are powerful: in order for your sin to be removed, you need *“A lamb”* (Luke 2:11). But, not just any lamb will do! It must be *“THE Lamb”* (John 4:42). But in order for your sin to actually be taken away, *“THE Lamb”* must become *“YOUR Lamb”!* (John 20:28).

Part of the Passover feast is that the lamb was to be eaten. Too often we forget that we are supposed to feast on the Word of God (John 1:1, 14) and desire it more than our necessary food (Job 23:12).

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As the LIGHT TO HIS PEOPLE – Ex. 10:22-23 (John 8:12)

The sacrifice of an UNBLEMISHED LAMB with no BROKEN BONES – Ex. 12:5, 46 (I Pet. 1:19; Ps. 34:20; John 19:36)

As the PASSOVER LAMB – Ex. 12:3-5 (I Cor. 5:7b; I Peter 1:19, John 1:29)

Wednesday – January 25, 2017

TODAY'S READING: EXODUS 14-16

OVERVIEW:

Israel's exodus out of Egypt and the crossing of the Red Sea; the song of Moses and Israel; Manna from heaven.

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

As the Passover clearly illustrates the Christian's salvation through the blood of the Lamb, so the journey of Israel from Egypt (i.e. the world) to Canaan (i.e. victorious Christian life) is a picture of the battles and blessings of the Christian life. Too many Christians are delivered from Egypt, but like Israel, get lost in the wilderness of unbelief. That is not to say they lose their salvation (that's an impossibility! Note that in the picture through Israel in Ex. 14:13, Israel never returned to Egypt), they just never receive all the inheritance that God has for them.

The crossing of the Red Sea is a picture of the believer's union with Christ (I Cor. 10:1-2). Israel was "*baptized unto Moses*" (i.e. identified with Moses who pictures Christ here) as they went through the Red Sea. We are identified with Christ at our water baptism, which pictures our salvation and separation from the world.

Just as there is a law of gravity to which all are subjected, there is a law of sowing and reaping (Gal. 6:7-8). Pharaoh reaped exactly what he had sown. He had been responsible for drowning many Jewish boys (Ex. 1:22); now his army was likewise drowned. Be very careful what you sow!

Moses and Israel sang a song of deliverance praising God for saving them from Egypt (Ex. 15). We, as Christians, have a new song in our hearts the day we get saved (Psalm 40:1-3).

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As MANNA from heaven – Ex. 16 (John 6:31-33)

1. It was a mystery – (Ex. 16:15 *i.e. manna = "what is it?"*; I Tim. 3:16).
2. It was a gift – (Ex. 16:15; Eph. 2:8-9).
3. It was on the ground (accessible to all) – (Ex. 16:14 – you had to bow, or

humble yourself to get the gift; children could get it best; Matt. 18:4).

4. It was small (speaks of Christ's humility) – (Ex. 16:14; Phil. 2:6-8).
5. It was white (speaks of Christ's sinlessness) – (Ex. 16:31; Gen. 3:15; Matt. 1:23).
6. It was sweet like honey – (Ex. 16:31, Ps. 119:103).
7. It must be received early – (Ex. 16:21; Isa. 55:6; Malachi 4:2; II Thess. 1:7-9).

Thursday – January 26, 2017

TODAY'S READING: EXODUS 17-21

OVERVIEW:

Water from the rock in Horeb; Joshua leads Israel in defeating Amalek in battle at the Lord's command; Jethro brings Moses' wife and two sons to Moses in the wilderness; God appears to Moses on Mount Sinai; God gives to Moses the 10 commandments; the civil law for the Nation of Israel and the consequences for disobedience.

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

Moses illustrates what a trusting Christian does in times of testing (Ex. 17): he turns to the Lord and asks for guidance! (See James 1:5) The Lord ordered Moses to smite the rock at Horeb and out would flow water for the murmuring people of Israel. The picture is obvious: Christ, who is our Rock, was smitten on the cross to provide living water to quench any thirsty soul.

At the end of chapter 17, Moses orders Joshua to lead the people of Israel in battle against Amalek (a picture of the flesh). This is a battle that will continue from generation to generation (the battle of the Spirit vs. the flesh - see Gal. 5:16-17). Our only hope in winning this battle is to let our Joshua (the Lord Jesus Christ) lead us to daily victory. Note that this battle was won only after Israel had received water from the rock (water is a picture of the Word of God which is our only weapon against the flesh – Eph. 5:26, Psa. 119:9-11).

Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, comes to the wilderness in chapter 18 and offers Moses some advice on how to delegate some responsibility so that he and the people of Israel don't get worn out (Ex. 18:16-18,21-22). Moses takes his advice (Ex. 18:24-26) and it certainly lifted some of the responsibility off of his shoulders. But, whether or not God wanted this to happen is unclear. Even Jethro didn't know if this would be pleasing to God (Ex. 18:23). Note that Jethro decided to leave Moses and the people of Israel in the wilderness to return to his own land (Ex. 18:27). The lesson to be learned is that we must be careful when getting "wisdom from the world". It may not be harmful, as in this case (since God doesn't condemn Moses), but it also may not be exactly what God had in mind. In any case, many times God will use our mistakes for His benefit. Hallelujah!

In chapter 19, Moses meets with God on Mount Sinai. It is here that God reveals to Moses His plan for the people of Israel and the rest of the world (Ex. 19:6).

God desired Israel to be *"a kingdom of priests and an holy nation"*. His intention was that Israel would be so different from the rest of the world that they would want what Israel had. God's plan is still the same! I Peter 2:9 says, *1 Pet 2:9 "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."* God wants us to be so different from the rest of the world that they want what we have.

In chapter 19, verse 11 God paints a prophetic picture of the second coming of Christ. God says, *"be ready against the third day: for the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai."* Peter explains in II Peter 3:8 that 1000 years is as one day to God. It has been about 2000 years (or two days on God's time clock) since Christ died on the cross. The third day is upon us, when the Lord will come down in the sight of the whole world (Phil. 2:10-11)!

Chapters 20 and 21 deal with the Law of Moses, or the Ten Commandments, as we most often refer to them. We know from Scripture that the Law was given to reveal our sin and need for a Saviour (Gal. 3:24)! We know that the Law is good (I Tim. 1:8-9) because it embodies the character and nature of God's holiness, but it must be used for the right reasons. The Law was never intended to provide our salvation, though it does have a very important purpose. The law was given to reveal to us our sin, so that in humility and contrition, we would cry out to God for the salvation He offers through His Son (Gal. 3:19-24).

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As the ROCK from which water flows – Ex. 17:1-6 (I Cor. 10:4, John 4:14)

Through JOSHUA – Ex. 17:9-16

Note: Joshua is the Hebrew name for Jesus, the one who fights for us in battle with our enemies.

Through the LAW – Ex. 20:1-17 (Matt. 5:17; Heb. 4:15; Rom. 10:4)

Friday - January 27, 2017

TODAY'S READING: EXODUS 22-24

OVERVIEW:

God gives examples of His “judgments” by which to judge right from wrong; Israel agrees to obey God’s commands; Moses goes up again to meet with God on Mount Sinai.

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

As we came to Exodus 21, God began giving Israel “judgments” by which to judge right from wrong. He lays down specific examples to serve as guides for properly judging His people. Remember, Israel was the first and only Theocracy – God was to be legislator, judge and chief executive. (Note that it was not a democracy or a republic!) The plan was simple – obey God and you will be happy, protected and prosperous. So note that the bottom-line is not how man relates to his fellow man, but how man relates to God (Jeremiah 11:4).

It is interesting to note the very first thing God says after giving them the “Big Ten” (Commandments). Treat your servants right! Keep in mind that they had just been delivered from 400 years of servitude to the Egyptians. Israel’s ideas concerning servanthood needed serious renovation. What follows are various laws that appear to be random, but God was very calculatingly laying down each one because they were essential examples for them to understand His character and values.

Just as Israel was invited by God to live inside the protection of a government under God’s watchful eye, so are we (Hebrews 8:9, 10). In our Lord’s very first sermon He specifically said that He had not come to do away with these laws, but to fulfill them (Matt. 5:17). As we read these commands we can see the importance of motive for judging to what degree wrong has been done. The bottom-line issue is all about the heart, and ultimately, the state of our heart is the summation of the law (Mark 12:30; Rom. 13:8, 10).

One of the most simple, yet profound (and blessed!) verses in this entire section is found in chapter 24 and verse 12. God is inviting Moses to come up to Mount Sinai to receive the infamous “tables of stone.” It is obviously a very significant piece of the entire puzzle concerning God’s dealing with man. The wording of verse 12, however, not only screams out the heart of the passage, but the very heart of God! Notice that God DOES NOT say to Moses, “Come up into the

mount, and I will give thee tables of stone.” What God says to Moses is, “Come up TO ME into the mount, and BE THERE: and I will give thee tables of stone. God lets Moses know that even more than giving him the incredibly significant tables of stone, what was important to His heart was that Moses come into His PRESENCE, and just BE WITH HIM!

So often we relegate the Christian life to “DOING.” God wants us to know that though there certainly are many, many important things that need to be done, what is vitally important to His heart is that we simply desire to BE with Him, like He desires to BE with us!

As you continue to make your journey through the Word of God, remember that what is in God’s heart is not simply that you DO your assigned daily readings, but that every day you come up into His PRESENCE through the pages of His glorious Book to BE WITH HIM!

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

Through MOSES who delivers God’s commands, consummates a blood sacrifice and communes with God for 40 days – Ex. 24:2,3,8,18 (Hebrews 10:12; Mark 1:13)

Saturday - January 28, 2017

Reflection

Wow! What a journey we have had this week and we have only just begun! In Exodus 14:28, as the Red Sea came crashing down upon Pharaoh and all the horsemen on their chariots, Pharaoh must have realized the answer to his question in Exodus 5:2, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice..." only it was too late. He could not see the judgment of God in the plagues against his gods, or the salvation He was bringing to His people, until perhaps he was taking those final struggled breaths before succumbing to the power of the sea. But even, if then, he didn't see the Lord, all those nations around did see. But more importantly, Israel saw the saving power of the Lord and glorified God for a time. But understand, Pharaoh did come to KNOW, just as we ALL will KNOW, when we will kneel before the Lord and with the tongue confess, "Thou art LORD" (Romans 14:5-11). As we read through the scriptures, and God begins to reveal Himself to us through His word, may we be prompted to NOT wait for that day when "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow... And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2:10-11) God desires on this day to be seated on the throne of our hearts, being magnified and glorified through the life He is living through us.

In reflecting back over the scripture we covered this week, let's be reminded of how truly applicable this Bible is to us. Although not necessarily written to us, it's quite clear that God had the church in mind when authoring the Book of Exodus. The Bible tells us in Romans 15:4, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 10:6 that "these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted." In the same chapter, Paul reiterates this very point, "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. God's word is clear. Let's never find ourselves discounting the Old Testament. Maybe even this week, we've seen ourselves directly in the middle of the story of the "exodus".

Understanding it is the weekend, let's take some time to look back over our devotional scriptures and remind ourselves of how it applies to us. For further study read 1 Corinthians 10, and see how God uses this very story to compare with our life as believers. We'll find in 1 Corinthians 10, that "with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in

the wilderness.” (1 Corinthians 10:5) Of course this is in reference to the children of Israel; however, let that never be said of us in our walk with Christ. We truly serve an amazing God! He has given us an amazing Book!

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION:

Exodus 9:16 *“And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.”*

Exodus 10:2 *“And that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; that ye may know how that I am the LORD.”*

Exodus 14:13-14 *“And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.”*

Exodus 18:20 *“And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.”*

Exodus 23:9 *“Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.”*