

“What God Gives Us in Troubles and Deliverance”

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¹⁵ And the LORD said to Moses, “Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward.
¹⁶ But lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. ¹⁷ And I indeed will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them. So I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, his chariots, and his horsemen. ¹⁸ Then the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gained honor for Myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.”

¹⁹ And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them. ²⁰ So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus it was a cloud and darkness to the one, and it gave light by night to the other, so that the one did not come near the other all that night.

²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. ²² So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. ²³ And the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

²⁴ Now it came to pass, in the morning watch, that the LORD looked down upon the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and He troubled the army of the Egyptians. ²⁵ And He took off their chariot wheels, so that they drove them with difficulty; and the Egyptians said, “Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians.”

²⁶ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may come back upon the Egyptians, on their chariots, and on their horsemen.” ²⁷ And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and when the morning appeared, the sea returned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing into it. So the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. ²⁸ Then the waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen, and all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. Not so much as one of them remained. ²⁹ But the children of Israel had walked on dry land in the midst of the sea, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

³⁰ So the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹ Thus Israel saw the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt; so the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD and His servant Moses.

Main Idea: Israel failed to respond to the Lord in faith in the wilderness. They didn't recognize all that the Lord was giving them in their troubles, responding instead in unbelief. So, what should we seek from the Spirit to be enabled to see the Lord giving us in our troubles? We desire to see Him giving us His prescriptions, His presence, His power, and His praise.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

Exodus 14 beginning in verse 15.

These are God's words. And you always said to Moses, why do you cry to me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward. But lift up your rod and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.

And I indeed will harden the hearts of the Egyptians and they shall follow them. So I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, his chariots and his horsemen Then the Egyptians shall know that I am Yahweh. When I have gained honor for myself over Pharaoh his chariots, and his horsemen, and the angel of God who went before the camp of Israel.

Moved and went behind them and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them. So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus it was a cloud of and darkness to the one and they gave light by night to the other so that the one did not come near the other.

All that night. Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east, wind All that night, and made the sea and to dry land and the waters were divided. So, the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand, and on their left, and the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, All Pharaohs horses, his chariots and his horsemen, And it came to pass in the morning.

Watch that the Lord looked down upon the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and plowed. And he troubled the army of

the Egyptians and he took off their chariot wheels so that they drove them. With difficulty The Egyptian said, let us flee from the face of Israel for y'all, when he fights for them against the Egyptians, then you always said to Moses, stretch out your hand over the sea.

That the waters may come back upon the Egyptians on their chariots and on their horsemen and Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and when the morning appeared, the sea returned to its full depth. Why don't the Egyptians were fleeing into it. So you always overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea and then the waters returned and covered the chariots.

The horseman and all the army of Pharaoh, that came into the sea, after them, not so much of one of them remained, But the children of Israel had walked on dry land, in the midst of the sea, and the waters were a wall, to them on their right and on their left.

So you always saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians and just real saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Thus, Israel saw the great work which Yahweh had done in Egypt. So, the people feared, you always, and believe you. And his servant Moses So far, the reading of God's inspired and inherent where it, It's always helpful as a preacher.

If you have an Old Testament passage, or if you have a New Testament passage, which by the way, Paul quotes from the gospel of Luke to Timothy, he quotes Scripture, just in case you've ever had heard someone say, well, they didn't really define what the Bible was for hundreds of years.

No, Paul quotes Lucas scripture and Peter refers to Paul's writings of scripture. And next week's Colossians passage, Paul is going to command that the letters that are currently in Laodicea and Colossians be read in the worship and then swapped and read in the worship. So it's always helpful when scripture interprets scripture for you.

Now, one of the things that we're going to be paying careful attention to for the next several chapters is What Israel did wrong and especially what they did. Wrong was, they did not see or honor the Lord who is revealing himself to them, but we've already prayed from Hebrews chapters 3 and 4 quoting Psalm 95, which describes how God's people are to worship Him.

They're to worship him with great, joy and exaltation. First part of Psalm 95. There's worship him with nearness, and reverence and intimacy middle of Psalm 95. And they're to worship him with submitted hearts. As they hear his word, the third third section of Psalm 95, which dovetails with what we were hearing and thinking about in terms of how we hear the word preached enact two this morning in the sermon in the public portion.

Well, there's a warning that we not that God's display of himself and his to us not be lost on us and that we we must hear him with faith and we must respond to Him. Another place that the same point is made from these passages as first Corinthians 10.

Which talks about some of you thought that I was being overly cheeky. When I talked about how Israel was sprinkled in the sea and the Egyptians were immersed. But first Corinthians 10 just does describe, Israel being baptized in the sea with Moses as they passed through. And yet. Listen, Covenant children and baptized adults you too can be presumptuous about your baptism.

It's not it's not a plague exclusively, spiritual flag exclusively under children. Although they had all been baptized in the sea with Moses and they had all eaten spiritual food and drink, they ate the mana and they, they drank from the rock. And so we, he's saying these, these things came upon them, but they were written down for our instruction.

Last, we received, baptism and partake in the Lord's Supper and yet take for granted the God who has displayed Himself to us and have our hearts full of desire for created things more than for our Creator and our Redeemer. That's first Corinthians 10 in a nutshell And so when we come to the beginning, as it were of Israel's walking with the Lord in the wilderness and he says he's going to deliver his people and make display of himself.

And the primary thing they're supposed to do, which we had at the end of last week's, passage was stand still and see the salvation of Yahweh, which he will accomplish today and then we have the Lord responding in verse 15. Which begins our our text this afternoon. Now there's at least four things that the Lord shows about how his people that he is.

Redeeming are to walk with him or or more correctly that he shows about what he gives us as he delivers us as he delivers us on the macro scale in sending Christ to save us. And as he gives us all of those little deliverances in our lives and delivers us as the scripture says, in other places, about other things out of every adversity or out of every trouble.

The first one that we have here is that he gives us prescriptions. Thankfully, he never says, thou shalt save thyself. He does give us. However, his law is instruction and his instructions, to Israel or fairly straightforward. Quite literally verse 15, Tell the children of Israel to go forward. Now, that seems like a bad idea because at the point at which he said that he has not yet, given the instruction for Moses, to raise the rod and stick out the arm and the Lord, and have the Lord divide the water thankfully in the actual logistics of how it happened.

The Lord had Moses do that the evening before they set out and then he parted to see all night long when they set out and in the morning. So, it wasn't quite like when they were crossing the Jordan at flood stage. And the priests actually had to step into the river before God stopped it up.

So it wasn't that much of a trial of their faith, But he said go forward, which sounds like a bad idea. And he told Moses raise your stick

in one hand, and stick your arm out over the water with, with the other one. Doesn't seem like it would be a very effective thing, and that's actually part of the point, isn't it?

Because Moses, even if he came up with with the best, yeah, history channel. Nature, channel Sciency approach to parting the Red Sea possible. Could never have done it anyway. It was the Lord God who would do it and so we often feel helpless like the things that he's telling us to do.

Yeah, I gotta read to my kids. Who have a sinful nature from me and have dull heads and can't sit still and rebellious hearts, all of which are symptoms of being descended from me. I'm gonna read to them from a really old book and then I'm gonna speak words out loud in the air to someone that we can't see.

Which by the way I failed, my psych evaluation when I was an EPC ministerial candidate. Because I talked to people that I couldn't see and I, you know, I believed that he heard me in responded and did stuff and anyway probably shouldn't use secular psych exams for your ministerial candidates.

But I'm gonna do this with my incorrigible children, and their souls are gonna get transformed going to come to faith in Jesus, of course, because it's God. Who does it? It's one of the white reasons why the ordinary means of grace are so ordinary and unimpressive and simple. So that we will see that the power and the glory is of God and not of us.

He gives he gives Israel. Prescriptions of what to do. They know what their part is, is not complicated, probably difficult because we're overcoming our sin and our unbelief but that's often the way the Christian life is not so complicated, even though it's difficult. So there are things that take wisdom and we cry out cry out for wisdom and but even then all other things, biblically considered you just make a decision and you trust that the that the Lord is doing you good.

It's not, it's not complex but it but it can be hard. He gives us his prescriptions More than that. He gives us his presence. How many of you? Well I want to take a show of hands. I grew up in a xenophelp church. That means I'm kind of old but I'm very grateful to God for the the little old ladies who found themselves in a mega church and we're just trying to serve wherever and however they could and they took on little children's Sunday school classes with as unmanageable a student as I was.

And one of the things that they would do is they would have us have the most difficult to handle kids. So I got to do a lot, you know, take the xenophilt dude and put them up on the felt scene. And yes, I violated the second commandment a lot and it was horrible and they didn't mean to do that and God is gracious and patient.

Merciful, But when we did Israel, walking through the wilderness, or going through the Red Sea, we had a pillar of cloud and we had a pillar of fire. You know what? We didn't have, We didn't have the angel And so because I didn't kind of grow up cutting my teeth on the Bible carefully.

Read it was surprising to me, I don't know. However, many times it was through Exodus that it first came home to me, there was an actual manifestation of a warrior who was I guess larger than life and, and the pillar and cloud went along with him as well. And so that, this, there was this great angel, which the angel of Yahweh in the Old Testament, I still have yet to find a passage where it can't be Jesus.

I could show you, you know, most of the passages I think it has to be Jesus. And this is probably a pre-incarnation manifestation of Christ leading. His people Now, he goes from leading to following in the passage. Why? Because as you as some of you like to say, he's watching their six, he gets behind them and the presence of God that had been with them, the whole time, God intentionally communicates to them as a comfort.

Now, God makes His presence known to his people different times, different ways. Different intensities and it should have been enough for their faith to have this angel. And this pillar of cloud by day and fire by night in front of them, They didn't need it to be behind them.

They didn't eat, but the Lord makes His presence, a comfort and encouragement to them. There were however, people who did not enjoy the felt presence of the Lord, who the Egyptians Did you notice that? Although he was light and comfort to Israel, what was he to the Egyptians? He was cloud and thick darkness, They couldn't do any recon because they couldn't get through the way the Lord made his presence known to them.

This is going to be known in the extreme and glory in eternity in, which God Himself and his presence with his people. It was so exciting to get to open and pull on the threads of, you know, from first grade first Kings six to see the whole of God's work in history and the whole of Scripture in terms of God bringing his adopted children that he was adopting in Christ to dwell with him.

God's presence is the heavenliness of heaven, But God's presence is also the horror of hell because he is immediately present in all of his glory and all of his fury and all of the delusions and self-deceptions will have been stripped away. We are not going to take the time to go to second Thessalonians 1 and see that But his presence is a great comfort to his people and sometimes his presence is uncomfortable to assistant.

If we have been backsliding, if there is duty that has left undone, if there's something left on your conscience but what does that do to

you? If you're a believer, Does it not provoke you tickling to Christ and say none can be lost to have Jesus and and he stirs up your repentance and your faith.

It makes you hate the sin that made. You feel like shrinking from your heavenly Father that some of you have had that experience with your earthly father you did something and you knew it was bad and you didn't feel like being around dad because you knew he knew or you didn't know if he knew, but he probably knew and and you were skittish around him until either you confessed or he being a good father pulled it out of.

You asked questions, like, have you eaten of the tree that I told you not to eat some of you remember? The illustration of the, the brownie footprints, you know, running out of the kitchen and the mom chasing better kid, But he provokes you to confront the sin and repent of it and find that.

Father was so glad to receive you back. And it was better after your restored than even if you had never been. Even if you had never sinned and the Lord frequently is that way with his children. He makes his presence known to us. And even when it's uncomfortable, he's provoking us to greater intimacy and enjoyment of him.

Now, God helping us by his spirit. I hope it has a longer lasting effect on us than it did on Israel. But remember, the reason things went the way they did with Israel is because they had the nature that every one of us started out with and the Lord was using them as an example.

So God gives them his prescription, he gives them his presence, he gives them his power. He makes display of his power. He tells them that this is about his gaining honor, over Pharaoh, and over the armies of Egypt and over the chariots of Egypt, and we cheer for His power.

It's way better than any superhero or, you know, whatever they call superheroes these days. I don't even say mutant anymore or any, I don't keep up enough like, enhanced or something, right? You know, evolution even infects. Superhero. Fiction God have mercy on us all so much better than even than any one of those stories where the, where the the superhero just makes quick work and minced.

Meat of the enemies. We laugh, I laugh every time at least inwardly I don't remember if I chuckled while. I was reading out loud just now every time it talks about God confounding the the Egyptians and causing the wheels to off their chariots and they became hard to drive Yes.

Chariots without wheels would be hard to drive And yet the Lord doesn't just by looking at them and he doesn't even have to look. And suddenly, you have the the Psalm 11 solution, It's almost 11 starts out with the problem where it seems like the wicked are so powerful.

And they're destroying the foundations and it's a and the Psalm 11 solution is God, is sitting on his throne and he's watching all of it and he's active and reactive to all of it. His eyelids test. Well, here he just looks at the Egyptian army and their wheels fall off and they realize that God is fighting for the Israelites.

So I don't know if you caught this, they start fleeing back into the water. Now things are a lot slower on the way back than they were on the way in. Because they're chariots, have no wheels and God, God, drowns them all and we see how easy it is for our for our champion, and be a second commandment violation.

If you're if you're playing, you know, the fictional games that children do and one got to be, you know, Superman one got to be Batman. One got to be the Green Lantern, I got one child. They always felt like everybody else was too powerful, so they just invented superpowers as they went along and nobody like that.

That The Lord is greater than all of that put together and that is the power that is at work for destroying your enemies. And for delivering, you One of the reasons you find yourself in trouble and so that not only you can learn the discipline of just walking the way.

The Lord has said, he's given you prescriptions. Not only so that you can know the difference that the presence of your God makes to you but specifically so that he can display his power in what he does out of it. Don't ever listen to the fools and say God will never give you anything that is greater than he intentionally gives you everything greater than you can handle so that he can handle it so that you can trust in His power.

So that you can see your weakness and said that when you come to him and he said, Lord, I'm too weak for this. He say I know my grace is sufficient for you. My strength is made perfect and weakness and say. All right, Lord. I'm gonna boast about being weak because God is my strength, all of our troubles and especially the greater the trouble, the greater the opportunity to see your God, who gives himself to be your deliverer, who makes display of your power, so that you can enjoy the best thing possible.

And the best thing possible is not leaks and cucumbers and fish in Egypt. I'm sure the recipe was great, But that's yeah. When Israel they would really want. I know, leaks are useful, but I've never looked at a leak even though I knew it was going to taste good when I was done with it.

And thought boy, that's a good looking thing to eat. But God himself is the most enjoyable thing that the praise of God is the most

blessed gift that you can receive God. Doesn't need your praise. He has old blessedness and praise and honor and glory in himself from all eternity to all eternity.

He didn't need a single thing when he created it but enjoying him in. Praise is God. Giving creatures his own pleasure, the joy of Christ that he came and he spoke to us that His joy might be enough and that's something that he's giving you and your trouble because you're gonna come out and you're gonna sing Life will have next week, Lord willing and Exodus chapter 15, You know, the first song for public worship.

Among the people of God, ever was a song about God, drowning people. So forget all of the, the bad press that the imprecatory Psalms get because he displayed, who he is and he displayed his power and he displayed it to people who really deserved to be round because the last thing they did before they stepped into the sea, was complain against the God, who was saving them.

And by all rights he should have damned them with the Egyptians that should have been a mixed multitude on the bottom of the sea But the God, who is jealous for his own? Glory is glad to get that glory in part by saving those who deserve the opposite. And so you have Romans 9 and living color.

Don't you Egyptians on the bottom and Israelites on the shore? Why? So that in the midst of displaying his wrath on many, he can also display his glorious mercy on those in his saving and when you're in the midst of the trouble, it's good to be able to come to it.

Exodus 14 and say, yes, God is giving me this trouble so that I will learn to walk by his prescriptions because I can't save myself, and I can't deliver myself from this difficulty, but I can do whatever he has commanded me to do independence upon him. And God has given me this trouble.

So that I may know his presence as my comfort in it, and the guarantee that everything that is against me, will ultimately be destroyed And God has given me this trouble. So that my complete lack of power may highlight his infinite power But God is also given me this trouble because he intends to deliver me out of it, so that I will get to enjoy, praising him.

You can cheat. It's not cheating. You can look at the back of the book and you can find out. You're scared for the protagonist in the middle of the book and you want to make sure they come out. All right, so you read the end in the end. There is no sin or sorrow, or death, or any such thing and every tear is right from their eye.

And what do you get to praise him and enjoy him forever? And ever Every one of the troubles of a believer is time limited and praise purpose. So you can already anticipate, we rejoice, and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. He says, and Romans chapter 5 even more, we rejoice in tribulations, Why?

I love adding trouble. No, But he's given me trouble, because he's gonna get me out of the trouble. And he's gonna bring me out at the end perfected, so that when it does come time fully to enjoy him, he will have made me someone who fully desires and enjoys him.

So God is doing a lot of wonderful things for Exodus their for the Israelites here, as he brings them through the sea and he puts them in this trouble, and we see several things for how to walk with him, and several things to see him doing giving giving us prescriptions to walk by giving us his presence, giving us display of his power in the opportunity at last to give him praise.

Let's pray. We thank you O God for the glimpse of yourself and your dealings with your people that you have given us here. We think you also for holding up the Israelites to us as a mirror for what we ought not to be. And to recognize the remaining fleshliness from our former nature that we might continue battling against it and we pray O.

God, that you would bring home to us how good you are. And all of these things that you are doing in our greatest trouble. Lord. We pray, especially for those. In our congregation who feel themselves, overwhelmed, who feel themselves in situations out of which it does not seem like humanly speaking.

They know. We're deliverance can come. We remember the bus family as we just heard about their situation. This afternoon, Grant to all your people who are in such situations to to have the glimpse of you, the understanding of you that you have laid out for us in this portion of your word that we might know you and honor you and delight in you depend upon you.

We ask all these things in Jesus name. Amen.