

June 30, 2011

THE EXODUS: Every Christian's Destiny Revealed

- The promises that we will discuss and the deliverances that are available to God's people, apply to modern Christians just as they applied to the children of Abraham and of Israel. This is because we are children of Abraham by faith in the promise of God. **(Romans 4 and 5; Ephesians 3:29)**
- Our destiny is appointed by God. That destiny is the destiny of all who are born into this alive but is realized only by those who have saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. **(Ephesians 1:3-12)**
- Man's eternal destiny is "life" for all eternity in the presence of God our Lord and Creator. We are all appointed to this destiny although there are many who will never embrace it and will consequently not receive it.
 - Each year, our government and the world's financial institutions retain millions, if not billions of dollars in unclaimed funds. The money is available to those for whom it was set aside yet they do not claim the money. It is theirs but they refuse to go through the process required to claim it. The money is like their eternal destiny, always available but never claimed. Therefore, many live in want and need when everything they need in this life and in the life to come, is readily available.

God's Promise to Abraham

- In Genesis 12 and 13 God promises to Abraham the (a) he would become the father of many nations through a child that was to be born to Abraham and Sarah (b) that God would lead Abraham to a land that was unknown to him at the time of the promise but that would become the homeland for Abraham and for his descendants.

(c) that God would be the Lord and God to Abraham and to all his descendants and that they would be God's people.

God had created man and woman and placed them in the Garden of Eden. There they were to enjoy fellowship with God forever. However, Adam and Eve chose sin rather than obedience. The wedge of sin would have become permanent had God not already had in place a plan for man's salvation. These promises to Abraham were the beginning of the implementation of that plan.

So it is that we begin to see God's plan unfold in the history of His people. God would use earthly events to depict the spiritual journey of every human as they came from bondage to freedom, from rejection of God to embracing God as Father and Savior.

Egypt: From Guests to Slaves

God preserved His people from the famine that wracked the Middle East during the days of Jacob/Israel and Joseph by establishing Joseph as an important ruler in Egypt where a plan was in place to store food for just such an occasion. Pharaoh offered to allow Joseph to move his family from Canaan to Egypt so that they could sit out the famine and live out their lives close to Joseph. Not a bad plan except for the fact that Egypt was not the land that God had promised Abraham and it was not to become a permanent settlement for God's people. In the 400 years between the end of Genesis and the beginning of Exodus, the children of Israel went from being guests to being slaves. The scripture tells us in Exodus 1 that a Pharaoh came into power who did not know Joseph and therefore had no regard for him and his family. As the people of Egypt began to see Israel as a threat rather than a blessing, their status changed from guests, to workers, to slaves.

Spiritual Parallel

- “There is a way that seems right to a man, the end of which is destruction” It seemed like the right thing to do. Move to Egypt to sit out the famine. And, there probably wasn’t anything wrong with that plan. The trouble came when the Israelites forgot the promise of God and the tangibility of that promise. They did not belong in Egypt, they belonged in Canaan.

We are forced to live in this world until God’s appointed time for each of us has expired. We are to be “in the world but not of the world”. When we get attached to this world and all it provides, we eventually become slaves to this world.

- There is nothing wrong with using certain things in this life to our own advantage as long as we remember the land of our citizenship. In fact, Joseph and Mary were warned to flee to Egypt when the life of the baby Jesus was threatened. However, when time came, they went back to the land of their fathers.

We are not citizens of this world. We are sojourners, passing through, occupying the land provided for us by God until we pass to the land of our eternal promise.

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- To become attached to this world is to become its slave. If we begin to consider the practicalities of this life outside the power and provision of God, we are setting ourselves up for trouble. This world is not interested in helping us. This world is only interested in using us, enslaving us to its own methods and projects. The Israelites ended up in slavery, building monuments to pagan gods. Do you see the similarities?

GOD'S DELIVERANCE

Arks: A picture of God's Salvation Through Faith In His Person and Word

- There are three arks mentioned in the Old Testament
 - Noah's ark (Genesis 6)
 - Moses' ark (Exodus 2)
 - Ark of the Testimony/Covenant (Exodus 25 & Numbers 10)
 - Christ was and is the human embodiment of the picture of the ark. In Him we find safety, deliverance and every promise of God fulfilled.

- NOAH'S ARK: Noah built an ark at God's direction by God's specifications. God's plan was simple: He would preserve the human race by sheltering those who were faithful to Him, in a place of safety, (the ark) while those who rejected Him would die. GOD WOULD PROVIDE A WAY OF ESCAPE, ONE THAT CAME FROM HIS OWN PLAN. THOSE WHO BELIEVED WOULD BE SAVED. THOSE WHO DID NOT, WOULD DIE.

- MOSES' ARK: Another time would come when God's people were surrounded by sin. This time, they were surrounded because of their own doing. They had settled in Egypt, outside the land that God had promised them, and then remained there for over 400 years. Over the course of those years they had become slaves. But again, God would send a way of deliverance. Again, safety was a matter of faith. Again, the leader of deliverance would come to the people through an ark. (Exodus 2) Moses would be preserved by the faith of his parent's in God's ability to preserve His people.
 - This is a great symbol of the amazing grace of God. **It was not God's fault** that His people had found themselves surrounded by sin in what was at that the most powerful empire in the

middle east. **It was not God's fault** that His people found themselves in slavery. But God's faithfulness to His promises and His grace with which He reaches down to man are fathomless. **God's faithfulness and grace caused Him to devise a way of salvation and deliverance.** His plan began with a basket-sized ark and a three month old baby who would be raised right under the noses of the Egyptians.

- THE ARK OF THE COVENANT, also called the Ark of the Testimony and the Ark of God was to be an everlasting symbol of God's commitment to deliverance. It was built to God's specifications during the time of their travel from Egypt to the promised land. It was to reside in the Holy of Holies and in it was to reside the Tablets of the Law which God had written with His own finger. God also commanded that a jar of manna and Aaron's rod that budded were to be placed in the Ark. Each of these represented specific aspects of God's deliverance and of His provision for His people. The Ark of the Covenant was to reside in the "Holy of Holies" and God said that He would speak to His people from over the top or covering of the Ark, called the Mercy Seat. The Ark was to go before His people wherever they traveled and when they went into battle it would be born before the army of God. Unless it was being born before the army of God, it was to reside in the Holy of Holies behind a very thick veil that separated it from the Holy Place which was, in turn, separated from the courtyard of the tabernacle.

- Jesus represents the combination and culmination of all of the Arks of the Bible. He is:
 - Our place of safety in a world of sin
 - Our place of deliverance when God judges the un-Godly
 - Our deliverance from the attempts of evil men to thwart the plan of God
 - Our deliverance from our self-imposed slavery to the lawlessness of this world
 - Our fulfillment of the Law of God and without Him, we can never live up to the requirements of the Law (**tablets of law**)

- Our provision when we are hungry, sick, wandering and afraid (**jar of manna**)
- Our Chosen High Priest (**Aaron's rod**) to whom we have constant access
- Our constant companion who leads us according to God's plan
- Our permanent salvation from the curse of sin and in Him we find freedom from sin's wages

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Spiritual Concepts in Exodus for the Modern Christian

Egypt – * represents the bondage of sin;

Exodus 1:8-14

⁸ Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. ⁹ And he said to his people, "Look, the people of the children of Israel *are* more and mightier than we; ¹⁰ come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and so go up out of the land." ¹¹ Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh supply cities, Pithom and Raamses. ¹² But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were in dread of the children of Israel. ¹³ So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor. ¹⁴ And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage—in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they made them serve *was* with rigor.

* also represents the world system in which we live; (*See Stephen's address before the Sanhedrin in Acts 7 and see the Book of Hebrews*)

* as Christians, we are sojourners and not citizens

(*Philippians 3:20*)

²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

Deliverance

* God hears the cries of His people and is touched by the desperation of their situation

Exodus 2:23-25 ²³ Now it happened in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry came up to God because of the bondage. ²⁴ So God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. ²⁵ And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God acknowledged *them*.

* if we "call on the Name of the Lord, we will be saved"
(Acts 1:21)

* God will deliver us by sending a deliverer

Exodus 2

¹ And a man of the house of Levi went and took *as wife* a daughter of Levi. ² So the woman conceived and bore a son. And when she saw that he *was* a beautiful *child*, she hid him three months. ³ But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid *it* in the reeds by the river's bank. ⁴ And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him. ⁵ Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river. And her maidens walked along the riverside; and when she saw the ark among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it. ⁶ And when she opened *it*, she saw the child, and behold, the baby wept. So she had compassion on him, and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children."
⁷ Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for you?"
⁸ And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the maiden went and called the child's mother. ⁹ Then Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give *you* your wages." So

the woman took the child and nursed him. ¹⁰ And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. So she called his name Moses, ^[a] saying, "Because I drew him out of the water."

* The world system that holds us in bondage is created by the evil one and will not relinquish control willingly but will resist our every effort to accept freedom in Christ. He began doing this by trying to destroy our deliverer when He was still a tiny baby

(see Exodus 2:1-10 above; Matthew 2: 13-18)

* When he could not destroy our deliverer he turned his attentions to us. When we attempt to break free of sin, it redoubles its efforts to hold us by increasing our troubles. Spiritual victory does not come without a fight.

(Exodus 5)