

The Gospel of Christ Jesus The Salvation of the LORD – Exodus 14:13

The Gospel of Christ Jesus is the title of our current series of talks. There are 6 talks in this series, and you can access any or all of them via the Truth for Today website. I gave talk number 1 which was based on John ch. 3 v. 16, and the title of that talk was, *God's heart of love*. Today we come to talk number 5 which is entitled, *The Salvation of the LORD* and, in the Lord's will, the series will conclude next week with Jonathan Hughes speaking on the subject of, *The power of God and my response*.

The Gospel of Christ Jesus is good news. That is the meaning of the word *Gospel*, good news. Perhaps you will know that the origin of the word, Gospel, is an old English composite word *god-spel*, where *god* means good and *spel* means news. So our modern word, Gospel, means good news or glad tidings. In a world where there is so much bad news, and fake news, how good for us to be occupied today with good news. God's good news!

The Scripture on which I have been asked to base my talk today is Exodus ch.14 v. 13, where Moses says to the Israelites, *Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will show to you today*. This is one of the very early references to the word *salvation* in the Bible and is full of instruction. I think it is good when considering a particular biblical word or subject to look up the first and last mention of it in the Bible. Often it is very interesting and gives us a good idea of the overall use of the word, or subject, in the whole of the Bible. Exodus ch. 14 v. 13 is, I think, the second mention of the word *salvation* and a comparison with its second last use, in Revelation ch. 12 v. 10, is interesting. There we read of a future scene when Satan and his angels are cast out of heaven, and a loud voice is heard saying, *Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ*.

It is very important to understand the history leading up to this event so I want to begin by giving a short recap. The history of the Jewish people began with Abraham. He was the one whom God called to leave his kindred and his father's house to move by faith to a promised land which God would show him. God's promise was to make of him a great nation and to bless him. Despite some personal failures, we read that Abraham *believed in the LORD; and he [that is the LORD] counted it to him for righteousness* (see Genesis ch. 15 v. 6). This was especially so in relation to his son, Isaac, who would be born to his wife, Sarah, in her old age, long after it was naturally possible for her to have a child. Sadly, instead of waiting on God's time, Abraham and Sarah acted without faith, and Ishmael was born to Hagar, who was Sarah's Egyptian maid. Tensions between Sarah and Hagar and Isaac and Ishmael would be the start of the conflict which still exists to this present time in the Middle East.

The Israelites would come to know through painful experience the truth of the word of the LORD when He said to Abraham, *Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance* (see

Genesis ch. 15 vv. 13-14). We see the fulfilment of this prophecy in the Scriptures we have before us today.

The promises of God to Abraham would be confirmed to his son, Isaac. Isaac had two sons, and although Esau was the elder, he despised his birthright and missed out on God's blessing. The promises would now be fulfilled in Jacob, who had twelve sons. Joseph and Benjamin were the sons of Rebekah, and were Jacob's favourite sons. Joseph was the elder of the two and was given a special coat of many colours, which caused his ten older brothers to hate him. When the opportunity arose to kill him, the brothers instead sold Joseph into slavery, and he ended up in Egypt, where after some difficult and testing situations, he became a very powerful man. Pharaoh made Joseph his prime minister, the second most powerful man in Egypt.

Later Jacob, whom God had re-named Israel, took his whole family into Egypt, where Joseph settled them in Goshen, a choice place for them to continue to live as shepherds. The Scripture records that there was a total of 75 of Israel's family in Egypt at the beginning. (I am quoting now from Acts ch. 7 where Stephen speaks of Jacob's kindred being *three score and fifteen souls* when they came into Egypt). Some seventeen years after taking his family into Egypt, the patriarch, Israel, died; but his family remained in Egypt, blessed and protected because of Joseph.

However, as the years passed, the family of Israel multiplied to the point that the Egyptians were concerned about their number. Joseph was dead and a new Pharaoh had come to power who did not regard Joseph and what he had done for Egypt. By the time Moses was born, life in Egypt was very different for the Israelites. Pharaoh was so worried about the rising population of Jews that he had ordered all the baby boys to be killed at birth. He had set the Israelites to hard labour and put taskmasters over them who made their lives unbearable.

But God had not forgotten His promises! Listen to what He said to Moses at the burning bush, *I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob... I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey* (see Exodus ch. 3 vv. 6-8). God had been working in the life of Moses for this very moment when he, at the age of eighty, would lead the exodus of the Israelites out of Egypt.

The story is fascinating. If you haven't read the beginning of the book of Exodus for a while, then take the time to read it; you'll be enthralled! Moses, together with his brother Aaron, brought the LORD's demand, *Let my people go...* to Pharaoh. Plague followed plague, judgement after judgement, but Pharaoh defiantly would not let the children of Israel go out of Egypt, until finally, when the firstborn of all the land were slain, both man and beast, in the dreadful Passover night. On that Passover night, those Israelites who put the blood of a slain lamb upon the doorposts of their houses were safe, but death came upon those Egyptian houses without the shed blood. This is such a striking picture, or type, of the death of Christ, the Lamb of God, who shed His life's blood on Calvary's cross so that we might be saved. I trust that each one listening today can say, *The blood of Jesus Christ [God's] Son cleanseth us from all sin* (see 1 John ch. 1 v. 7).

Based on the number of adult men, given in chapter 12 v. 37, it has been estimated that as many as two million souls left Egypt that night with all their cattle and herds. There were also evidently some Egyptians who joined the exodus, as we read that it was a *mixed multitude* who went out (see v. 38).

Now we arrive at the start of chapter 14, where we find the Israelites who had been sheltered from the destroying angel by the blood, seemingly trapped at the Red Sea. Pharaoh's heart would

again be hardened towards the people of God, and he would say that they were entangled in the land, shut in by the wilderness. That was after all a fairly accurate analysis of their position, camped as they were beside the Red Sea. With the Red Sea impassable, the mountains on either side insurmountable, and the armies of the Egyptians pursuing them, they were without hope, or so it seemed. Naturally they were doomed, but that is not what God had said to Moses. God said that He would *deliver them*, and that is exactly what He was about to do.

In passing, I find it is incredible that only hours after they had experienced the Passover, the Israelites spoke to Moses saying, *Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness* (see vv. 11-12).

We read, *And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he shall show to you today* (see v. 13).

As we have already said, the blood of the slain lamb, in Egypt is a striking picture, or type, of the death of Christ; and many Scriptures could be quoted to show the necessity of the shedding of blood in order that our sins might be forgiven. Indeed there is no forgiveness of sins except by the shedding of blood! But the Passover alone does not give a complete picture of the death of Christ. In the triumphant crossing of the Red Sea, and the annihilation of the enemies of God's people, we see what Moses called, *The salvation of the LORD*. It is most striking that it was this experience which caused the people to sing, to sing the song of victory! As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we, too, can sing the song of redemption, the song of victory. We are on the victory side, not the winning side, but on the side which has won! In His death and resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ has conquered, (abolished or annulled) death, and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (see 2 Timothy ch. 1 v. 10).

The thought of salvation is one of deliverance, and of being set free. This was the word of the LORD to Pharaoh through Moses (and Aaron), *Let my people go....* Sheltered by the blood in Egypt, the Israelites would now be saved by power at the Red Sea, set free and delivered from Pharaoh and Egypt! In my younger days I would hear preachers say, *The crossing of the Red Sea is a picture, or type of Christ's death for us, whilst the crossing of the Jordan is a picture or type, of our death with Christ in baptism*. I think that these are two powerful lessons which, if understood, would result in every Christian rejoicing in what has been accomplished by Christ, and would cause them to want to live victoriously for Him.

If we in our day are to learn the spiritual lessons from these Old Testament historical events, then we need to view Egypt and Pharaoh as pictures, or types of the world and Satan. When we speak about Egypt as a picture of the world, we are thinking particularly about the world with its godless pleasures and sinfulness. We read in Hebrews ch. 11, the great chapter of faith, that Moses chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than enjoying the pleasures of sin, which were doubtless to be found in Egypt, but only for a season. It was the passage through the Red Sea, and that on dry land, which brought the people of God deliverance from Egypt and Pharaoh. If we are believers on the Lord Jesus Christ, we do well to recognise that in the cross of Christ, the Father has delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love (see Colossians ch. 1 v. 13 JND).

We have been delivered, note that this statement is in the past tense. And just as the word to the Israelites was *Stand still and see the salvation of the LORD*, we in our day have no part to play in our deliverance. The work of salvation is God's work, and we can add nothing to it. If we try to add anything, we detract from the glorious fact that our eternal salvation depends solely and

entirely on the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As believers, our position, our standing before God, is that we are *holy and without blame before him in love* (see Ephesians ch. 1 v. 4). I am trying to be very careful with the words I use, as the Christian's position and condition, or standing and state, are sometimes sadly very different. It has often been said that it was easier for God to take the people of Israel out of Egypt, than to take Egypt out of the people of Israel! You may also have heard the saying, *God has more to do in us, than by us*. We will return to this subject later, but just to reiterate that as believers, our position is outside this world's system. We are *not of the world*, as the Lord Himself said concerning His own, in prayer to His Father (see John ch. 17 vv. 6-16). Paul says, *For our citizenship is in heaven* (see Philippians ch. 3 v. 20). What a testimony we would have if our condition, and our state, were more often in keeping with what God has made us in Christ Jesus!

Returning to the history of the Israelites, it certainly could not be said that they were in a right condition or state before God, as they wandered in the wilderness. But that did not alter the fact that they had been delivered from Egypt. So the lesson for us today is that as Christians, as well as having our sins cleansed by the blood of Christ, we have been delivered from the world and Satan, through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the salvation of the Lord! A study of the epistle to the Romans will reward any Christian who wants to have a greater appreciation of the Gospel, and the salvation of the Lord. In chapters 6 and 7, the apostle Paul takes up the matter of our standing and our state before God. In chapter 6 he writes, *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin*. And later on he writes, *Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof* (see vv. 6-7 and 11-12).

Whilst looking again at the subject of *the Salvation of the Lord*, it occurred to me that we have another powerful example in the story of the prophet Jonah. Perhaps, too, this story adds another dimension as it tells of one who was saved or delivered from his own will. We have considered Egypt and Pharaoh as pictures, or types, of the world and Satan but from the chapters we have referred to in Romans, we see that we have another enemy, the flesh. It is worth saying straight away that in the Bible the word *flesh* is used in various ways. Perhaps the first and most obvious way is in relation to our bodies, i.e. flesh and blood. It is certainly worth saying, too, that our bodies (of flesh) are not sinful. The translation, *our vile body* in Philippians ch. 3 v. 21, really ought to be *our body of humiliation* (see JND translation). But the word, *flesh*, is also used to describe the state of fallen man in his sin. Just to quote another verse, again from Romans, Paul writes, *For I know that in me (that is in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing* (see ch. 7 v. 18).

Have you heard the saying, *What God could not mend, He brought to an end?* Our human nature, (the flesh), as inherited from our first parents, Adam and Eve, is sinful and cannot please God. When we repented of our sins, and believed the Gospel of God, we were saved. God does not look for us to reform or to turn over a new leaf; no, our old man is crucified with Christ! God gives us an entirely new life, a life in which we can please Him. The Bible teaches clearly that the Holy Spirit indwells every child of God (see Ephesians ch. 1 v. 13) and gives us the power to be able to live Christ centred lives, lives where our condition and our state match our position and our standing. Such lives are lives with real purpose, which glorify God and which can be a blessing to others.

Jonah was a prophet, a man whom God used to speak His word to the people of his times. But when God told him to go and preach to the wicked people of Nineveh, Jonah had other ideas. The Bible says that he fled, and boarded a ship which was sailing in the opposite direction. Was Jonah afraid to preach repentance to the inhabitants of Nineveh? Did he fear that he would be mistreated because of his message of divine judgement? No, the sad truth was that Jonah didn't

want to do what God had told him to do, because he knew if the people of Nineveh repented of their sinful ways, that God would show mercy to them. Jonah would then look to be a very poor prophet. You can read this in the book of Jonah ch. 4 v. 2.

Jonah had gone his own way, and paid the fare, as all who disobey the Almighty must do! The storm arose and eventually Jonah was cast overboard into the sea. In His providence, God had prepared a big fish to swallow him up, and in chapter 2 we hear the prayer of Jonah from the belly of the fish. Jonah had to be brought to the realisation that his life was over. His life literally would have been finished were it not for God's intervention. The whale vomited Jonah on the dry land. Jonah's will was now broken, and he was ready to obey the word of the LORD. Delivered out of death, Jonah declared that *Salvation is of the LORD* (see ch. 2 v. 9).

The flesh, the world and Satan will always oppose us in the things of God, so in closing I want to quote the words of the apostle Paul, as an encouragement, but also as a challenge.

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me (see Galatians ch. 2 v. 20).

May God bless you all.

Thank you for listening to this Truth for Today talk on The Salvation of the Lord, Exodus ch. 14 v. 13. Talk number T1110.

KJV Version of the Scriptures used unless stated otherwise.

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