

“Who is the LORD?” (Exodus 6:1-9)

“*What is the most important thing in the world?*” That was the question that I Googled earlier this week. Here are the results: love, world peace, family, money, sex, sunshine, oxygen, and spirituality. Now how would *you* answer that question? “What is the most important thing in the world?” The Scriptures before us this morning tell us clearly and plainly that *the most important thing in the world is to truly know the LORD, in all of His glory.*

We are continuing in our study on the life of Moses: Our stated goal in this series is to see that while Moses was *great* but that Jesus is *better*. Last week we saw God call Moses, an 80-year-old shepherd, to bring the people of Israel out of their 400-year bondage in Egypt. So Moses goes to Pharaoh, King of Egypt, and asks him to let Israel go, notice Pharaoh’s reply in Exodus 5:2: But Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and moreover, I will not let Israel go."

“Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice?” That question “Who is the LORD?” is the question that is answered in the following chapters. And the answer is this:

Thesis: *The LORD is the God who is able to keep His promises to His people.*

Look again at the passage I read earlier. Did you notice all the promises in Exodus 6:1-9? Look at all of the “I will’s” beginning in 6:6!

6:6a “I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians”

6:6b “I will deliver you from slavery to them”

6:6c “I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment”

6:7a “I will take you to be my people”

6:7b “I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God.”

6:8a “I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob”

6:8b “I will give it to you for a possession”

How does God bookend this seven glorious promises in verse 6 and verse 8? “I am the LORD.” So God puts His name on the line when He makes these promises. God’s name is at stake. His name is on the line. Will He be able to keep His promises?

Nothing can stand in the way of the LORD keeping His promises to His people. No matter how bad things look, no matter what opposition arises to stand in the way, nothing can ultimately stop the LORD from keeping His promises to His people.

I. The LORD is able to keep His promises because He is the *only* God. (Exodus 7-11)

The LORD is the *only* God. In chapters 7-11, we read the story of the Exodus and of, particularly of the plagues that God cast down upon the Egyptians. If you are unfamiliar with this section of Scripture or maybe you’ve only seen it in the movie “Ten Commandments” with Charlton Heston let me summarize these five chapters for you.

God commands Moses to go to Pharaoh, King of Egypt and demand that he let the people of Israel go from their slavery that they might worship the Lord freely. Pharaoh repeatedly refuses. So the LORD performs a series of ten devastating plagues through Moses:

In chapter 7, God turns the Nile River into blood. In chapter 8, He plagues Egypt with frogs and gnats and flies. In chapter 9, He takes the life of the Egyptian livestock, and He causes boils to break out and He casts down hail. In chapter 10, He sends forth locusts and He causes the land to be enveloped in pitch darkness so deep you can feel it.

Why? What is God's ultimate purpose in sending forth these plagues? Look at Exodus 9:13-16: Then the LORD said to Moses, "Rise up early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, "Let my people go, that they may serve me. ¹⁴ For this time I will send all my plagues on you yourself, and on your servants and your people, so that you may know that there is none like me in all the earth. ¹⁵ For by now I could have put out my hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth. ¹⁶ But for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth."

The purpose of the plagues was not to *destroy* but rather to *display*. The plagues of the Exodus are signs that display for the entire world to see that there is no God like the LORD. He alone is God. The plagues show the mighty power of God and display His majestic name to all the earth.

Moses and the people of Israel sing in Exodus 15:11 "Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?" Answer: There is none like the LORD.

So, if you are a Christian who calls Providence home the question for you is: *How big is your God?* The God of creation, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of Moses, and the God of the Exodus is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! This is your God! Our God can topple kings, and part seas, and use weak and sinful people to spread the glories of His matchless name into all the earth! *Providence, how big is your God?*

Are you living to make His name known, or are living to make a name for yourself? In your job, in your family, in your world? Whose name are you living for?

This story is all about God. It's not about Moses. My two boys enjoy watching the animated movie, "The Prince of Egypt", that tells the story of the Exodus. After watching it, I asked Elijah, "Son, who did all those signs and wonders? Moses. Who turned the Nile into blood? Moses. Who parted the Red Sea? Moses. The answer to all those questions isn't Moses: God did all of those things THROUGH Moses! Moses is not a miracle worker: Moses is a servant. This story is all about the LORD.

So, Providence: Remember this morning that your LORD is the only God. The idols of the nations are no threat to Him (cf. Exodus 12:12b). You can trust Him to keep His word. You can trust Him to keep His promises.

If you are here and are not a Christian, I wonder what you make of all this? Do you see the love of God in the warnings of God? God sent Moses to warn Pharaoh to release His people from bondage. Do you have a Moses in your life? Someone who has warned and pleaded with you to turn to God?

On Sept 8, 1900, a Category 4 hurricane ripped into Galveston, Texas. This storm was the deadliest natural disaster in American history. It reportedly killed 8,000 people and swept away over 12 city blocks. But here's the shocking news: This loss of life could have been avoided. This killer storm didn't come without warning. Isaac Clines was the local weatherman in Galveston. And he dismissed all these warnings as absurd. Earlier he'd discouraged the town from building a sea wall to protect it from a massive storm. He thought it would ruin the view from the beach.

Several days before the storm, Galveston received multiple telegraph reports warning that a huge storm was entering the Gulf of Mexico headed for the Texas coast. Sailors were coming into port in warning about the terrible seas in the Caribbean. So on the morning of Sept. 8, 1900, Clines noticed huge waves pounding the shore, and he noticed the barometric pressure plummeting, and he noticed the threatening clouds rolling inland... but he did nothing. Suddenly, the storm hit. It brought 150 MPH winds and a 16-foot storm surge that hit the city like a tidal wave. Thousands drowned. 3,600 buildings were lost.

Miraculously Isaac Clines survived the storm... but he lost everything. He lost his wife, his family, his home, and his name. Isaac Clines ignored the warnings. He refused to listen and obey the warnings until it was too late. Because of his unbelief he lost everything that he held dear.¹

God's loving warning to you is this: If you are trusting in idols and not the true God, you will lose everything just like Pharaoh because the LORD is the only true God and He will keep His word of promise.

II. The LORD is able to keep His promises because He is the Merciful God. (Exodus 12-13)

The LORD is the Merciful God. The culminating plague in Exodus 11-12, was the death of the firstborn. So just as Pharaoh had taken the life of the firstborn children of Israel back in Exodus 1, God takes the life of every Egyptian firstborn in the climactic plague.

It's easy to miss God's mercy. With so much death and wrath and violence in this section of Scripture, it is easy to overlook God's mercy. But at the heart of the Exodus is God's mercy and the pinnacle of this mercy is the Passover.

Right before God delivers his people through the Exodus, He instituted a sacrifice called the Passover. According to God's instruction to Moses in Exodus 12, every Israelite household was to select a year-old, unblemished, male lamb and slaughter it at twilight. This lamb was to be roasted whole and eaten that night, together with bitter herbs and bread made without yeast.

¹ See Erik Larson, *Isaac's Storm* (New York, Vintage, 2000).

“It shall be eaten in one house; you shall not take any of the flesh outside the house, and you shall not break any of its bones.” (cf. John 19:32-36) Not one of the Passover lamb’s bones was to be broken.

After slaughtering the lamb, Moses is told what to do with the blood. Exodus 12:7 “They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it... Exodus 12:13 The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.”

Only those who are covered in the blood of this spotless lamb would be saved. The Passover lamb acted as substitute, dying in the place of the firstborn sons of Israel, in order that they might escape the wrath of God. Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

Passover has remained an annual reminder to Israel of God’s saving mercy. Two thousand years ago, a Passover like no other before it was celebrated in Jerusalem. It was on that night, Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, the Lamb of God, was betrayed and handed over to die on the cross for sinners.

If you are not a Christian know that God, your Maker, has made a way for you to know Him. Even though you have sinned and separated yourself from Him and are under His just condemnation, God sent His one and only Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to be the Passover Lamb. He lived a perfect life and died on the cross, to take the penalty of death that we deserve because of our sins and to ransom us by His precious blood. God raised Him from the dead and He is calling all men everywhere to turn from their sins and to trust in Christ. The only way to know God is to know Christ. Do you know Him?

Providence: Do you see why Jesus is better than Moses? Rejoice in God’s mercy in Jesus! Rejoice “knowing that you were ransomed not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.”

Rejoice that your sins are no obstacle to the mercy of God. Friend, there is more mercy in God than sin in you. God delights to save and to keep sinners. Our LORD is gracious, merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He has taken your sins and drowned them in the heart of the sea. He has separated your sins from you as far as the east is from the west. So great is His love for you in Christ. Only a merciful God could save and keep people like you and like me. Because the LORD is a merciful God, He is able to keep all of His promises to His people.

Rejoice this morning that “Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.” Rejoice that the “mercies of God are new and fresh every morning.” Rejoice that if you are covered by the blood of the Lamb of God, all you will ever get from God is mercy. And that is enough. Rejoice that because the LORD is a merciful God “all the promises of God are ‘Yes’ and ‘Amen’ to you in Christ.”

III. The LORD is able to keep His promises because He the Mighty God. (Exodus 14-15)

The LORD is the Mighty God. In chapters 14-15, we see the mighty power of God. By the strength of His might, the LORD delivers His people and keeps His promises. After the final plague, Pharaoh relents and lets Israel go. But he quickly changes his mind, he gathers his army and 600 war chariots and he pursues Moses and the Israelites into the wilderness all the way to the Red Sea.

Moses and the people are trapped and they begin to fear; they doubt that God can keep His promises.

Exodus 14:10-14 When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they feared greatly. And the people of Israel cried out to the LORD. ¹¹ They said to Moses, "Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt? ¹² Is not this what we said to you in Egypt: 'Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." ¹³ And Moses said to the people, "Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. ¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent."

Notice in 14:13 the command "Fear not." Now think about this? You are trapped between the sea and a charging army and 600 chariots of war and your leader, after consulting with God, says "Don't be afraid." God's most frequent command in the Bible is "Do not be afraid. Fear not." Over 300 times in Scripture God says to His people: "Don't be afraid."

What are you afraid of this morning? Maybe you have a sick child. God's word to you this morning is "Don't be afraid." Maybe you are awaiting the results from biopsy and God's word to you this morning is "Don't be afraid." Maybe you are worried about the layoffs at work and God's word to you is "Don't be afraid." Remember, Providence: The LORD fights for His people. He is our refuge and strength; He is our help in times of trouble. Therefore, we will not fear. Stand firm by faith.

So God instructs Moses to stretch out his hand over the sea and the waters of the Red Sea split. The people of Israel walk between the waters on dry ground. The Egyptians pursue Israel.

Exodus 14:27-31 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen." ²⁷ So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal course when the morning appeared. And as the Egyptians fled into it, the LORD threw the Egyptians into the midst of the sea. ²⁸ The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen; of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained. ²⁹ But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. ³⁰ Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹ Israel saw the great power

that the LORD used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

Do you see the great power and might of God? My wife Allison was talking to our 4-year-old son Elijah this week and she asked him, "Elijah, how strong is God?" And he got all excited and said, "Mom, God is so strong He can carry a whole brick all by Himself!" One whole brick, wow!

We treat God like that though. We have a mountain of worry and fear and anxiety on our back and we hand God a brick. What burden are you carrying this morning that you need to cast onto God? Providence: "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties upon him, because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:6-7).

The only fitting response to this mighty God is to worship Him, to sing to Him, to rejoice over Him, to praise Him, to exalt Him!

Exodus 15:1-3 Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the LORD, saying, "I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea. ² The LORD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him. ³ The LORD is a man of war; the LORD is his name.

Pray that we would be a church that glories in the mighty power of God. He is powerful and strong and mighty and He is able to keep all of His promises to you.

We began this morning asking the question, "Who is the LORD?" Well, this is the LORD. He is the only God, He is the merciful God, and He is the mighty God. His Son, Jesus Christ, is only Savior, and He is a merciful Savior, and He is a mighty Savior.

What could possibly be better than knowing Him in all His glory?

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