

Who is Jehovah?

Exodus 5:1-23

7/20/08

Intro

Moses has been called by God to deliver the people of Israel from slavery and oppression. He gave him powerful signs so that when he met with the Hebrews they would believe that it was God that had sent Moses and that He was concerned about them and that He had seen their affliction. The people then bowed low and worshipped.

Moses and Aaron, his brother, then appeared before Pharaoh with the message God had given them, “Let my people go that they should celebrate a feast to me in the wilderness.”

Some suggest that this was a bit deceptive since God’s plan was to completely free the Hebrews, not just give them a long weekend rest from their labors. But God instructs Moses to begin with this small request and thus the hardness of Pharaoh’s heart will be revealed in that he will not let them go even for such a small thing as going three days in the wilderness.

But Pharaoh responds with a question that makes perfectly good sense. “I don’t know Jehovah. Who is the LORD that I should obey his voice?”

That question is still being asked today and is the most important question we will ever answer because it will determine the outcome of our lives.

I. He is Creator of Heaven and Earth

- Pharaoh had never heard of Jehovah, though he had heard the names of more than 100 Egyptian gods.
- Each of the gods had their own appearance and most of them imitated some aspect of God’s creation. There was lion, a jackal, a hawk, a crocodile, a cat, a frog, even flies.

A. Creation reveals the glory of God

- The heavens and the earth declare the glory of God.

Isaiah 44:24, Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb, “I, the LORD, am the maker of all things, stretching out the heavens by Myself and spreading out the earth all alone,”

Illus – in other words, He has His glory in everything he created.

- Our response is to be amazed at God, rather than be amazed at the things God created.

Illus – We often see some wonderful and amazing thing and say, “that is amazing.” How much better to recognize that the One who created it is yet more amazing?

- Some will even take it much further and say, “This is god.”
- How incredibly ridiculous to honor anything as god which has no life or power on its own.

Romans 1:22-23, Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

- This would just be a sad part of history if it wasn't for the fact that this is still done today by those who don't want to know God.

B. God will make Himself known

- “I don’t know Jehovah,” Pharaoh said. At this point, this is understandable. But God made Himself known to Pharaoh so that he was without excuse.

Exodus 7:5, “The Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch out My hand on Egypt and bring out the sons of Israel from their midst.”

- At first, it may have seemed that the God of the Hebrews was not very powerful. After all, they were still slaves and Pharaoh was still the singular power in that part of the world.
- Also, their gods did seem to have some spiritual reality. The demonic world is a spiritual reality that desires to keep many in blindness.

Illus – Egypt even had a god, Thoth, who was the god of magical powers. Egyptian magic was called heka and all their gods and even the people were thought to have this magical power in various degrees.

Priests were the main practitioners of magic. The most respected users of magic were the lector priests, who were supposed to have the power to make wax figures come to life and, interestingly enough, to be able to roll back the waters of a lake.

Illus – In fact, when Moses and Aaron stood before Pharaoh, Aaron threw down his staff and it became a serpent, but the magicians did the same, through Aaron’s staff then swallowed their up.

- Then when Moses struck the Nile and the waters became blood. The magicians were able to do this also and Pharaoh was unconcerned.
- When God then brought a plague of frogs out of the waters so that the land was filled with frogs, the magicians also did the same.
- But when God brought forth gnats out of the dust of the earth, the magicians said, “This is the finger of God.” But still Pharaoh would not recognize the God of Israel.
- Finally when God sent hail upon the land of Egypt and all their crops and all livestock in the fields were destroyed did Pharaoh say...

Exodus 9:27-28, Then Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, “I have sinned this time; the LORD is the righteous one, and I and my people are the wicked ones.” Make supplication to the LORD, for there has been enough of God's thunder and hail;”

C. We should obey His voice

- “Who is Jehovah that I should obey his voice?” Pharaoh asked. God made Himself known to Pharaoh and He is making Himself known to us as well.

Romans 1:20, For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

Hebrews 1:1-4 God reveals Himself in His Son, Jesus Christ

- Today, there are many people who say, “What is the Bible that I should listen to what it has to say??

App- the problem is that when someone says, “Who is God that I should obey Him?” They open their lives to the devastating consequences of not listening.

- There are inevitable consequences in our lives when we violate the laws and principles of God’s Word.
- But the one who listens to the Word of God will find his life blessed. God gave his Word to protect us from the dangers and devastations and plagues that come from going our own way.
- The Word of God is not given to be heavy burden to keep us from a happy, blessed and wonderful life. It’s exactly the opposite.
- The law of God is given that we might be blessed with a rich, abundant, joy-filled life.

Matthew 11:28-30, “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Psalm 1:1-3 How blessed is the man...

- How much better to discover who God is and be blessed in obeying His voice, *than to be like Pharaoh and discover who God is by the disaster that comes* when people disregard the wisdom of God for the foolishness of man!

II. God is Greater than our Troubles

- Pharaoh's response to Moses and Aaron was to make the burden even greater for the Hebrews by forcing them to make bricks without providing straw.
- In other words, things got worse before they got better.

A. Keep troubles in the right perspective

- For the Hebrews this must have seemed the greatest problem they had yet faced, and it seems they could only see the troubles immediately in front of them.
- But God was doing something so much greater!
- Their first response was to turn to man for help, yet men will let us down.

Psalm 146:3-4, Do not trust in princes, in mortal man, in whom there is no salvation. His spirit departs, he returns to the earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

- Our trouble is that we want to know in advance what God is doing. Moses was actually told in advance and even then it didn't help all that much. Even he starts to complain to God (verse 23).
- What we need is the faith to trust that God knows what he is doing and that He is able to do what He says He will do and that He has our best in mind...

Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the plans that I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.”

I Chronicles 29:11-13, “Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O LORD, and You exalt Yourself as head over all. Both riches and honor come from You, and You rule over all, and in Your hand is power and might; and it lies in Your hand to make great and to strengthen everyone. Now therefore, our God, we thank You, and praise Your glorious name.”

B. Don't let frustration defeat you

- It's instructive to see the reaction of everyone in this story. First, the foremen turn to Pharaoh for help and get a reprimand instead.
- Then when they turn to Moses and Aaron, they blast them with strong words of anger and accuse them to their face.
- Frustrations divide too many people: financial troubles cause couples to fight, families troubles cause parents and children to be divided, churches become divided over silly things.
- As for you, walk in the integrity of your heart with all steadfastness of faith!

Psalm 15:2-3, 5, He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness, and speaks truth in his heart. He does not slander with his tongue, nor does evil to his

**neighbor, nor takes up a reproach against his friend;
...He who does these things will never be shaken.**

**App – don't let the unbelief of others trip up your faith or
your relationship to God!**

- Instead of fighting or arguing with the foremen, Moses simply turns to God with the concerns of his heart. There his faith will be strengthened by God's words and actions.
- We need strong leaders today who do not let their faith waiver when others are tossed and doubting. Don't wait for others to lead, you step out and lead by your example of faith.

Psalm 62:5-8, My soul, wait in silence for God only, for my hope is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I shall not be shaken. On God my salvation and my glory rest; the rock of my strength, my refuge is in God. Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us.