

The Salvation of Jehovah

Being Addresses on The Book of Exodus

Chapter 3

Exodus 5:1, 2, 22, 23; 6:1-9

W. T. Turpin

spoken, and shall he not make it good? Behold, I have received commandment to bless; and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it. God brought them out of Egypt; he hath, as it were, the strength of a unicorn. Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob" -- Jacob again, look; even though he be Jacob, still he is the beloved of God -- "neither is there any divination against Israel; according to this time" -- after all the wilderness trials and difficulties are over, and Israel proved to be a failing people in them -- "according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought!"

The Lord, in His grace, give our hearts to take in the wonders of such communications as these, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Chapter 3: *Exodus 5:1, 2, 22, 23; 6:1-9*

We were looking last week at the way in which God was pleased to fit His instrument of deliverance, Moses, who was the savior of that people whom God had raised up to carry out His own purposes with respect to them, how God took him in hand and dealt with him in long-suffering goodness, bore in great patience with his slowness, and backwardness, and self-will, and want of faith and confidence in God. But now there is a further step. After God had passed 'His servant through the necessary qualification for the work that He had for him to do, He sends him directly into Pharaoh's presence, as we have read to-night. Moses and Aaron, Aaron being given to Moses as a kind of spokesman, to share the burden with him, go directly into the presence of the monarch with this claim of God on their lips, "Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.

But before that, in the last verse of Ex. 4, there is one of the most striking and touching scriptures in the whole of this history. When Moses and Aaron go to the people, and tell them what God's thoughts about them were, announce to them the purpose of the deliverance of God, the whole heart of the nation is touched, as it were, bowed under the prospect of deliverance. Under the sense of the delivering grace of God, "they bowed their heads and worshiped."

And this was a direct contradiction to the want of faith in Moses, because what he had said was, "They will not hear me; they will not listen to me." But would they listen to God? would they hear what God said? These servants of God announce to the nation that God had visited them. And I called your attention last week to the way God; as it were, takes up the faith of His servant Joseph as he passed off this scene. For these were Joseph's dying words, "Behold, I die, but God will surely visit you." His faith went on and grasped in prospect the promise of God. And now God takes up this word and puts it into the mouth of Moses so long afterwards, and sends him with, as it were, this echo from the death-bed of Joseph, for God was visiting His people; and the moment the people heard it, they bowed their heads and worshiped. It

was not a question of believing man, but they believed God, their ears were opened to God.

And this is a thing of the greatest moment for us. For a servant of God may be a little too prominent in his own eyes. They will not listen to me, says Moses. But will they listen to God? that is the point. What a blessed thing it is to forget oneself, and to be behind Christ, as it were, to be behind God. And it is this retirement we ought to seek, that God may be prominent.

I was greatly struck in reading in the Acts, lately, the account of the dealing of God with the Gentiles, when they were taken up and God's mercy reached them. Paul and Barnabas were specially the servants of God in that wonderful bringing in of the Gentiles into blessing; and when they are challenged by the Judaizers of that day with regard to it, they come and announce to the assembled council at Jerusalem what had taken place; and it is very striking that they do not say what *they* had done. Now, I say, affectionately, that there is a great deal too much of that. But they say what God had done; they do not talk about their preaching or ministry; that is not what is uppermost in their thoughts; but they do announce what God had done. If they bring themselves in, it is always what God had wrought through them, not what they had wrought by the power of God; because, I suppose, there is no servant of Christ but would say whatever he did, he did by the power of God-- but still, if people talk like that, it is *you* that did it; but if *God* does it, what a different thing that is! And you will find that order carefully preserved in this book of the Acts of the Holy Ghost, as it really is, giving it a specific character -- they declare what God had wrought. No doubt He was pleased to do it through them, but still, He was the doer of it. And what is prominent there, is the arm and the power that was effecting His own purpose, and not the instrument through which He did it. Now I have no doubt at all, that poor Moses here was prominent in His own mind. "They will not believe me," he says to God. But when he comes to them and announces the fact that God had thought of them, and had visited them, and had come down to deliver them, and that it was about to be effectuated, the people accept the testimony of God, and bowed their heads. And I think it is a most affecting thing to see a whole nation touched with the sense of the sovereign favor that thought of them in the bitterness of their bondage, and had come down in wondrous goodness to take them out of it.

Then, as soon as ever the servants have delivered the message to the Lord's people, they announce it to the one who was the means of keeping the people in the bondage of Egypt. And I believe Pharaoh, here, is really, in figure, Satan, that keeps in bondage and distance from God His chosen. Just as I believe, afterwards, Amalek is Satan to interrupt the progress of the people of God through the wilderness. But here it is the power of bondage, and you know what Satan's power is in that way. So Pharaoh held them fast in his grip. And Moses comes in now as the vessel of God's power with the announcement of the purpose and claim of God, "Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that

they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.” Now, beloved friends, that is very blessed; because you get not only the fact of the announcement here, but also the scope of God’s purpose. And that is a great point. The purpose of God with regard to His people is to take them absolutely and positively out from Egypt to Himself. Let them go, He says; they must be entirely and completely out from Egypt to hold a feast to me. As long as ever they were in the bondage of Egypt, they were bound to think of themselves. The very shackles that were upon them, the very pressure that was upon their spirits, the very taskmaster’s lash that was over them, of necessity, kept the people occupied with themselves. They could not think of God in Egypt; nobody thinks of God in Egypt. You must ‘be out of Egypt to think of God; and therefore He says, “Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.” You could not hold a feast to God in Egypt. People think they can. But you never could make God an object in Egypt, because you are not free. Remember, I am not speaking of experience at all. It matters not what experience you have, however wonderful, or deep, or blessed, you must have objectively in your soul, by faith, the knowledge of redemption, before you can have anything of real true experience. And there is a danger of the whole thing being reversed, and instead of the freedom and power of redemption known in people’s souls, which is the great spring and genius of everything, the attempt is to begin the other way, and it is ruinous to the soul. I say, you cannot be occupied with God, you cannot make an object of God, you cannot hold a feast to God, you cannot have Him simply before your soul until you are out from Egypt. Are you out from Egypt? I do not ask you what feelings you have, but do you know redemption? People think that is a very curious question to ask. I do not ask, Do you know forgiveness? though forgiveness is part of redemption. Many a person knows forgiveness who does not know redemption. If you know redemption, you know this, not merely that you have got forgiveness of the sins that pressed upon your conscience, but that you are clean out from the whole power that held you, and brought to God. Now, that is not a question of experience at all, but a question of faith. You will pardon me now for going a little into what is called the fundamental, for I believe it is the fundamental that is wanting. It is faith in a fact, not in a theory, or in a sentiment or in an experience, but faith in a fact, and a fact too, that does not receive any addition by your believing it, and nothing is detracted from it by your not believing it. This redemption is a thing wrought between God and Christ, and we had no part nor share in it at all, except the miserable wretched selves and sins that were all disposed of then.

Now you have the scope of the purposes of God insisted upon here in the beginning of Ex. 5, “Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.” I want to have them out, and I must have the three days’ journey between My people and Egypt. Why? Because that is exactly death and resurrection. There must, as it were, be death and resurrection between My people and the house of bondage,

before they can be free to hold a feast to me in the wilderness.

Now there are two things I would like to call your attention to in connection with this. You will find the greatest possible weakness on the part of God’s people, even in the presence of the manifestation of His grace; and weakness in the servant too; and you will find solemn wickedness in Pharaoh, typical, no doubt, of the wickedness of the power of Satan. Pharaoh says, “I know not Jehovah, neither will I let the people go.” And when you look at the people, the announcement of the purpose of God stirred up all the power of the enemy, and Pharaoh puts harder pressure upon them. Just as Satan does now. If he sees that there is the probability of a person being rescued from his power, then he increases the bondage, and makes it more difficult and more hard. If a person is entirely and willingly the dupe of Satan, he gives him an easy time, “When a strong man, armed, keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace.” He does not torment the world, he makes it easy for them. But when it is a question of the delivering power of God going forth to a person, then you find all the power of the enemy put forth. Here Pharaoh says, “I will not let them go,” I do not know the Lord; why do you announce that word to me? I mean to keep them, and I will make it harder for them now, as you have caused this interruption; they are idle, and I will increase the task, and make the burdens heavier. And then you see the weakness of the people; they do not listen to Moses for cruel bondage. And Moses gets restive under it, and goes to God, and says, Why have you afflicted this people? and why have you sent me? Ever since I came in to speak to this people, evil has happened to them, and you have not delivered them at all.

Beloved friends, there is not one of us that would endure that for half-an-hour. But O the wonderful patience of our God! See how longsuffering He is with His servant in the opening of Ex. 6, how He bears with the weakness of His poor vessel; there is no chiding, not a word of rebuke. Such a speech as that from Moses to God might well call forth the bitterest rebuke from God; but there is not a word of that. He does not say, You have forgotten yourself; you have forgotten whose presence you are in, whom you have spoken to, and what is becoming the dignity of the mighty God. But what He says is this, “Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh, for with a strong hand I will bring them out.” And then there is again the most magnificent unfolding of His mighty name. I was not known, He says, to the patriarchs, by My name Jehovah, I was known to them as God Almighty. Their knowledge of God never went beyond that revelation, because the revelation of God’s name defines the position of the persons to whom the revelation was made, and the knowledge they have of Him for the time being. Thus Abraham, blessed man as he was, his knowledge of God never went beyond God Almighty. He was known by the name of El-Shaddai; now there is another name. By my name Jehovah, which is the name of covenant relationship, I reveal myself now to you and to Israel my people; I am Jehovah, and I have taken that people into relationship with myself; I have made a covenant with them, and that name implies the covenant. I am Jehovah,

and I will take you out from the bondage of Pharaoh, and I will take you to me, and I will bring you into the land, and I will remember my covenant, He says. O, beloved friends! it is wonderful to see how God stills the risings of the storm in the heart of Moses by opening out all these wonderful things that are connected with Himself -- I will bring you out, I will emancipate you, I will extricate you, and I will bring you to myself, I will bring you into the land I promised you. There is the wonderful way that He meets the unbelief of a Moses, and the unbecoming nature of his address to God in the end of chapter 5 by the most exquisite manifestation of sovereign goodness and divine grace.

Now there is another thing to which I will call your attention, which will finish this part of our subject, before we come to what is really the first part of redemption, viz., the passover in Ex. 12. Before Pharaoh felt the power of God dealing with him, he refused to let the people go. I do not go into the detail of it, but we have the dealings of God with Pharaoh, and with his land in the various plagues that were sent upon them. And directly

Pharaoh began to feel the power of God touching him, the open opposition, and the avowed refusal to let the people go, is given up, and stratagem takes the place of opposition. Now, that is always the way with Satan. First it is refusal; then, when God's power is felt, wiles. There are four distinct wiles of the devil, whom Pharaoh represents here, by which he seeks to frustrate the purposes of God, and accomplish his own purposes. The first is in Ex. 8. First of all it is, You shall not go. Now he says, You must hold a feast in Egypt, go and sacrifice to God in the land. It is very important to see how all these things work. I will put no restriction upon you, he says, with regard to your offering sacrifices or holding this feast; you may go and do that, but you must do it in my territory, you must do it in Egypt. And, beloved friends, that is what Christendom is doing at the present moment. The attempt of Christendom is to make an object of God in Egypt. The whole principle of Christendom is short of death and resurrection. And therefore they fall under this first wile of Pharaoh.

I think it is a terribly solemn thing to see how many people there are who profess the name of Christ, who take His name upon them, and who positively are citizens of this world on principle -- I do not mean by failure now, but on principle. That is to say, their avowed principle is to remain in the world, connected with the world, to receive honor from the world, and take status in the world, in the hope of so doing good. That is the common principle of the day. And one of the favorite figures is, that just as the leaven was put into the meal and wrought until the whole was leavened, so people are to be in this world, which is Egypt in that sense, and to be the leaven in the world, to assimilate the world to themselves. That is in principle the first wile of Satan. He says, You may go and worship God, and have your religion, but you must have it in Egypt.

Now the answer of Moses to this is very distinct, and that

servant of God rises, for the first time, to the thoughts and purposes of God, and meets it by a distinct and positive refusal. He says. I absolutely refuse to have anything to do with holding a feast to God as long as we are within the territory of Pharaoh's power; we must be outside. And he adds very aptly and very properly, "we should sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians."

The second wile is also in Ex. 8, and it is this. When Pharaoh was made to give up that opposition by the pressure of the hand of God upon him, then he says, "I will let you go . . . only ye shall not go very far away." Now what a wonderful principle that is! The break must not be absolute. That suits a time-serving age, a half-and-half sort of thing, a little bit of God and a great piece of the world. You must not go very far away, he says. You must be sufficiently near to keep you in touch with Egypt. And yielding to that sort of compromise, giving in to that half-and-half sort of thing, has been the moral destruction of the saints of God. That is not a clean break; it is going, but still there is a sort of hold that keeps you; you are within sight of the territory, you are still within the region of the bondage, you are not far away, you are near. Still, the faith of Moses rises up to refuse that too. Moses insists on it that there must be a clean break. Then Pharaoh refuses again, and the hand of God touches him again.

Now we come to the third wile in Ex. 10. Compelled to yield again under the power of God, Pharaoh says, "Go now, ye that are men, but," he says, as it were, "you must not have your little ones, you must leave your children behind." That was a very deep, dark, designing plot of Pharaoh. He knew right well that if he could retain the children in Egypt, he would keep the people's hearts there. You see the deep design of it, the children, the little ones, in Egypt. and the people in the desert. You may well say that was a terrible thing. God, in His infinite mercy, grant that we may not do that on principle, because that is very often done on principle. You say, "Oh! but you know I cannot alter the heart of my child, I can only leave my child there, I can only wait until God in His infinite mercy, comes in and acts for my child." Well, that is simply playing into the hands of the devil. I do not deny or question for an instant, that you cannot alter or touch the heart of your child, I perfectly admit that; but you need not leave your child in Egypt, at any rate. Because I cannot touch the heart or move the affections of my child, am I to leave my child in Egypt? Never, through God's grace; never for a moment.

And as that was the design of Pharaoh in those days, so you will find the same thing in after years in Num. 32, when it was a question of the land. There the two tribes and a half come to Moses, and say, "We have got cattle, and the land of Jazer, and the land of Gilead is a land for cattle; the pasturage is rich, the locality is inviting, we are herdsmen with abundance of cattle, and there is the very place for us; do let us have our possession here, do not let us cross Jordan. do not let us get the other side of death and resurrection." That

was the awful sin of the two tribes and a half, that they wanted a resting-place short of the place that was the purpose of God. Well, says Moses to them, if you choose to take your place there, you cannot sever yourselves from the *conflicts* of your brethren, and you must at any rate cross the Jordan. If you want to have this place for your resting-place, leave your wives and your little ones. And they are all left in this region, which really was not the true side of Jordan for them, while the men had to go over and fight the battles and join in the conflicts of their brethren. But mark, they left their hearts behind them, in the region that was not God's territory, and there was where the link was. They were linked with the region that was not the country in the purpose of God for Israel; they simply went over to take their part in conflict with their brethren; and when the conflict was over, they came back to possess the territory that was not in the purposes of God at all. It is the same thing exactly there. And oh! what a terrible thing, what a snare it is when one's mind goes over it; and that is how God has spoken to us in scripture with regard to this kind of thing. You cannot read of a David's lamentation over an Absalom, or of the stricken heart of an Aaron over the death of his two sons, stricken down before the Lord, nor the lamentation of a Jacob over Simeon and Levi, without feeling the solemnity of all this. And there is the thing that speaks to us, that the children are positively left, on principle, in Egypt, brought up for Egypt, educated for Egypt, every thing of Egyptian ways, manner, habit, custom, all cultivated about them, and the parents, forsooth, professedly taking the place of being pilgrims and strangers in the desert. And there is nothing I know, that has such a solemn effect at the present moment as this wile of Satan. I do not know any sadder sight than to see this wile accepted and taken up on principle by heads of households. I speak affectionately to fathers and mothers, who deliberately, on principle, dissociate the interests of their children from themselves. That is what I am speaking of now, not of failure and want of confidence in God. That is a trying thing enough, and we are all liable to it, even suppose our principles are the best, because we have to carry the principles out in faith in God and dependence on His Spirit; and I quite admit that right principles of themselves are not sufficient. But what I earnestly seek to press upon you is, that there should be true principles, and I say, No, through God's grace, I will not content myself by saying, My children are there in Egypt, and I will leave them there, because I cannot move them or touch them -- never!

I think it is a wonderful word that God said of Abraham, and a wonderful word that was said to Rahab, and you get the principle in both. God said,

Shall I hide from Abraham that thing that I do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation?
For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him.

I know that Abraham will not dissever the interests of his children from himself in principle --

he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him --

I trust that man, that on principle he will maintain for his children what he maintains for himself. Remember results are not yours and mine at all. I am, through God's mercy and grace, a preacher of His gospel -- do you think I am responsible for results? I am responsible to preach Christ, but not for what follows, not for the number of people that are converted or saved -- that is God's power. So I say to parents, You are responsible not to sever the interests of your children from your own, and you are responsible to maintain the headship of your family.

I have often thought of the wonderful words said to Rahab. You know she acted in faith towards the men that were spying out the land, and they say to her, We will be clear of this our oath; you take the scarlet thread and bind it in the window, and they said, "Thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee"; that is to say, she is taken as an illustration of headship -- you bring them there, you ally their interests with yours, and it is all well. Oh, may God, by His grace, give you to see the weighty principle that is in that. The very snare exposed here shows the importance of the subject; the very wile that Pharaoh uses in order to detain the people in bondage, to keep them in the land of Egypt, by having power over their little ones, shows you what it is.

Well, the last snare is in Ex. 10 too. Again feeling the pressure of God's hand, Pharaoh says, I will let you go, and your children shall go too; but, he says, your flocks and herds must not go. Now what do you think is the meaning of that? There is a great deal in it. We say, God would not have them go resourceless, or empty-handed, or shorn of what they possessed. I am sure that is true, but I think there is more than that in it. There was a deep design of Satan, which Pharaoh really is, in saying the flocks and herds were to be left behind. And I have no doubt at all that what really lies at the root of it was, that they were to go out into the desert, without the means, when they were there, of sacrificing to God. When they were out there, in the enjoyment of the liberty that God had brought them into, they were to be shorn and destitute of the very means by which God was approached in those days; that is to say, it is a death-thrust at the great truth of sacrifice as the means of drawing near to God. I have no doubt that is one reason why he said, You must leave your cattle, your flocks, and your herds. It is exactly what we find to-day; and though I greatly dislike bringing a subject of this kind before Christians, still one has to remember that we are part and parcel of the professing church of God, and it is well to know exactly what we have to meet, and it is all round about us. I often feel that, perhaps, we live too far away from all that goes on, and it is a great loss to us. You cannot dissociate yourself from the responsibility of the church as a whole; there is surely loss in your soul if you do. often think, when people speak of the failure and ruin, that they are not

thinking of the ruin of the church of God, of that beautiful thing that was set up at the first here in this world; they are thinking of something less. Now I feel increasingly what a solemn thing is the failure and departure of the church as a whole from the truth of God. And the very thing that is creeping in rapidly at this present moment is just this, you may have Christ's life down here in this world, blessed, precious life as it was, and all His blessed beautiful example, and manipulate it into every kind of thing you please, but the devil will rob you of a Christ that underwent the judgment of God due to sin if he possibly can. That is what is pointed out by the flocks and the herds. In other words, they were to go out into the wilderness without Christ, because the flocks and the herds for sacrifice were the appointed means of drawing near to God in those days. We have been brought to God through sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, and only on that ground could any be brought to God. God forbid one should say a word that would leave even a passing impression upon any mind that one did not adoringly value the blessed life of our Lord Jesus Christ upon earth. Never was there such a wonderful path, such wonderful grace, such wondrous love as was displayed by Him all those years, but that, blessed as it is, *could never bring us to God*. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone" {John 12:24}. He was alone, alone in His blessedness, alone in His perfection, alone in His beauty, alone in His path here; and He might have remained alone, for not one could be brought to God save by the sacrificial death of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the judgment of a holy God met in that death, and the bearing of sin. And that is the very thing that is attempted to be set aside at the present moment. And in this is the blessedness of God's word, we see how the principles of God's word come out here, what a wonderful book the Bible is, how things in it all through, from the very commencement, bear upon the present moment. Here is a book that was written hundreds and hundreds of years ago, and yet the same design of the devil, the same contrivances by which he is working at the present moment to destroy the unity and integrity of the truth, are all presented in picture in the Old Testament, and the whole thing depicted for us in the NT.

Once more Moses meets this with a positive refusal. Our flocks and our herds, as well as our little ones, must go with us; there shall not a hoof be left behind; we will not leave one single thing that belongs to us in Egypt; so far from leaving our children there, we will not leave our cattle there -- not a hoof.

And then there is one other principle of the deepest importance here. He says, We do not know what we shall have to sacrifice to God until we go there. Now that is a great point. We are not in a position to say what God will require from us until we have been brought to God, until we are standing on God's ground. We must have our foot, so to speak, on terra firma, on solid ground, before we can tell what God will require from us on that ground. Because all responsibility flows from relationship, from the position we are set in before God. And that is what makes it so important

to maintain and press position. There is great danger in constantly pressing responsibility apart from this. I do not want to make little of it, but I always feel, when I am pressing position, that I am increasing responsibility, I am putting the very soul and marrow, as it were, into it. If I say, You are brought to God Himself in the full redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ, brought clean out of Egypt, and brought to Him, and here set down before Him in all the fulness and efficacy of that redemption, if your soul gets the sense of that in faith, you will say, oh! how responsible I am. And you do not begin to think of it in a legal way. Whereas, if responsibility of itself is pressed, people become legalists, and seek to fulfil their responsibility as in law, and they never get a proper sense of their responsibility on that ground; because it is the position, the place, I am brought into, and the relationship I am set in before God, that defines, and increases, and quickens, and energizes my responsibility.

Take an illustration of it. Suppose you were to take a poor, little, wretched, desolate Arab boy off the streets of London, and say to him, My boy, I want you to live like a prince. Prince, indeed! a poor, destitute, miserable beggar a prince! There would be no sense in it. You want him to live like what he is not. Your conceptions may be very grand; the idea in your thoughts may be very wonderful; you may have a marvelous scope before your mind; but you have got no leverage power to reach that poor little waif. But suppose you take him, and say, "The Queen of this realm has been pleased, in the exercise of her own gracious sovereignty, to put you into a position of the most wonderful nearness to herself, and to her throne"; you put the ground under his feet at once, you have given him the emolument, the dignity, the place, the power, and there at once you define the responsibility that belongs to him.

Now that is a very feeble illustration, but it is an illustration, of the manner in which God has acted towards us in His grace. And I am certain of it, and I am responsible to God for saying it to you, that the true way to increase responsibility is to press privilege. Nothing else will ever give us a sense of the importance of the claims of God upon us -- claims, not in law, but in grace -- (I hope you will understand how I use the word) save knowing in our very souls from the scripture the marvelous, blessed way that God has abounded toward us. He has brought us to Himself, done it by the sacrifice of His own Son, and by the complete overthrow of every hostile power, as you get in Ex. 6, "I will take you to me for a people." O beloved brethren, just get the sense of that, "I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God." It is the very thing the apostle says in 2 Cor. 6, when he combines in that chapter all the names by which God was pleased to reveal Himself in former times, and says, "Wherefore, come out from among them," that is, the worldly, "and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." Father, now is the name expressive of the revelation of God in Christianity, and you get in that chapter