

Altogether On a Smoke

Exodus 19:4 – 25

~ God delivered our Spiritual Safari on eagle's wings with the children of Israel from the land of Egypt to Mount Sinai in our last report. They are going to be forced to make a very definite decision here on this mountain. Eagle's wings speak of the deity of God; and they set forth salvation in symbolic terms that we, as humans, can comprehend - by the grace of revelation from the Spirit of God. Eagles wings also set forth discipline by the grace of God – as we shall see later. God delivered Israel and redeemed them by Blood and by Power - His Blood and Power. When the death angel swept through Egypt and took the firstborn of everyone who did not post the blood on their doorposts that night, the plagues were ended – just like that! Israel was liberated from their slavery and bondage that very same night, you may recall. Then, they went through the Red Sea with Pharaoh on their heels ready to slaughter them like animals; and the children of Israel would have been obliterated if God had not performed a miracle at that time.

Well, in this section of Scripture, we see Israel well on their way to the Promised Land; via Sinai. They are going out from the death of Egyptian darkness and into the light of Heaven itself; from the heartlessness of living under the slave master into the very heart of our Comforter, the True and Living God - Christ Jesus! They are given victory from total defeat. God has brought the children of Israel to where they are at in our study as He has brought you and me to where we are at in our lives as I type this report and as you read it. Let's thank Him for that today.

We have seen seven very definite and significantly meaningful experiences Israel has had so far. We saw how God met each of those needs specifically. God is our provider today - and only He provides for us. God gave Israel food and water from nowhere. God sweetened the bitter waters at Marah by providing a means to treat the water; because the water was bitter! Then, we learned that the victory was won by prayer over Amalek. We saw how we simply cannot overcome our flesh by our own human effort. We

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must turn our lives over to and learn to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit of the Living God. People chatter so much about the Lords will this and the Lords will that - and some devote their entire program to selling you a plan on how you can find the Lords will for your life. Well, there is a whole bunch of worldly wisdom packed into those programs - and God calls it complete foolishness.

No one can teach you how you can find the "Lords will" for your life, friends. When you make a conscious decision to actually study the Word of God properly, correctly and completely in a sincere and systematic search for the Lord Jesus Christ, then you'll discover His plan and purpose for you in His service. There is no other way. Period. Interestingly, NONE of the self-help plans include a plan of prayer that simply ASKS that His will be done in your life. Oh, no, those plans involve you squeezing the Bible into whatever shape you have manufactured to fit your religious philosophy. You won't find out His will that way, friends. I promise you that. The idea that we are to be expedient to establish and use certain methods just doesn't happen to be Gods way of furthering the cause of Christ according to His Word. God bears us as He bore the children of Israel – on eagle's wings – by His marvelous grace. By that grace we are able to walk by faith. Well, instead of being content with His grace the children of Israel chose to have law....

4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

~ The correct question in your life is NOT what God's will is. The sincere and honest question is: will you keep the commandments God gives you in your life? If you are keeping His commandments, you'll never have to worry if you are in His will or not. That's how that works. The children of Israel are in the process of exchanging grace for law. Many people do that today even though we live in the age of grace where God does not save by law. There is such a startling contrast between law and grace. The law demands and says, "do; and continue doing." – Grace says, "DONE - believe; it is

finished.” Law exacts; grace bestows. The law says “work” but grace says, “rest.” The law makes threats and pronounces curses and judgment and condemnation; grace entreats and carries a blessing, encompasses forgiveness and edifies the soul by comforting us. The law says, “do, and thou shalt live.” – grace says, “live, and thou shalt do.”

The law condemns the best of men; but grace restores the worst of men. The law reveals both the character of God and the weakness of man. Whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth might be stopped, and the whole world realize that it is guilty before God. The law does not save us in any way, shape or form. Moses, who gives us this law from God, never stood trial for his murder of the Egyptian. Moses never kept that law at all! This understanding will culminate in Moses losing his temper and smiting the rock, as we shall see. We need to make some careful notes here that the law will be given to show us very definitely that we cannot keep it! The law has been added for the sake of transgressions.

The law reveals we are sinners. The law is our schoolmaster by which we are brought to Christ so that we might be justified by faith. The schoolmaster that Paul speaks of is not a schoolteacher, though. The schoolmaster is the pedagogue’s servant who takes the little heir and leads him to be educated by others. The law brings us to the cross and shows us our need for a Savior - and that we are sinners. The original intent of God was for all of the tribes of Israel to be one big kingdom nation of priests, you may recall. Due to their failure at Kadesh and their failure here where the law is given, and where they’ll make a golden calf, only one tribe is selected to be priests. In the Millennial Kingdom the intent will be for the entire nation to be a priestly nation again. That is the purpose of, and it will be the program for the church, after it is removed from the earth and is present with the Lord in the New Jerusalem....

6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

7 And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him.

8 And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.

~ This Scriptural juncture marks the beginning of what we call the dispensation of law. Anyone who states that dispensation is not Biblical is only revealing their total and complete ignorance of Holy Writ. They are only interested in arguing - not edifying. Frankly, I probably wouldn't even talk to those people about this. They need to learn the Gospel first. For the children of Israel, it all begins at Mount Sinai when God gives the law to His people through Moses His servant. This dispensation runs all the way from the Exodus to the cross at Calvary; from one Mount of God to another Mount of God. We also have a new revelation that a people under ideal conditions are not able to keep a law.

Very interestingly, in verse eight, the children of Israel agree to do whatever God says - but they haven't even heard what God will require! They're just agreeing to anything and everything with God without seeing any of the details. I think this is a big problem for converts that come to Christ to fix their lives of all the problems they are having. They make a commitment they cannot keep; usually a vow they can never keep. Well, He will fix your problems, my beloved - but He will do it His way - not yours. Your ways are why you have those problems. Most people do not know what they are getting themselves into when the Holy Spirit calls them, and they respond. As they dig down a little bit into this law, they discover it's a bunch of unleavened bread - not very appetizing. So, they part ways with Jesus and either go away frustrated or they adapt a hardline religion that is as cold as a dead fish in a cooler full of ice.

When you think you can please God by keeping the law, you're going to find yourself in a world of trouble. For the next fifteen hundred years of Biblical history we will examine the lives of the families of the children of Israel under law and we will see utter failure to keep this law. They will fail God at, literally, every step they take. We fail God with every step because it is impossible for the natural man to uphold every letter of the law. Interestingly, even if you COULD keep the law – which you cannot – but IF

you could then God still does not accept you on that basis. God has the flesh on a different plane and under a decree that says altogether it will NEVER please Him! The law gives the old nature a guideline to control it; but since the old nature is nothing but a horse thief, all it wants to do is steal horses! The old nature is revolutionary! To be carnally minded is death; to be spiritually minded is peace because to be carnally minded is enmity against God. The old nature is not subject to the law of God; neither, indeed, can it be!

Our flesh is the enemy of God. It can never be obedient or law abiding unto Him. Have you figured that out in your own life? Have you discovered that you are a complete failure at both life and in meeting the standards of God? We need to thank Him today that He has made other arrangements for us! This Christian confidence today that tells me they keep the law - what laughable hypocrites they are! Friends, you KNOW you do not measure up to Gods standards - or you just aren't being honest - and you do not believe the Word of God. The children of Israel say, "... bring on the law" in their extreme self confidence. This is arrogance and awful, unspeakable blindness and ignorance of spiritual matters. God has already told us that we cannot be saved under the law! Keeping the law has been tried out under ideal conditions and the law cannot be kept by mankind....

9 And the LORD said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the LORD.

10 And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes,

11 And be ready against the third day: for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai.

12 And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death:

13 There shall not an hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live: when the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount.

14 And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people; and they washed their clothes.

15 And he said unto the people, Be ready against the third day: come not at your wives.

16 And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled because it was a frightful experience.

17 And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount.

18 And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.

19 And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.

20 And the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the LORD called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up.

21 And the LORD said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish.

22 And let the priests also, which come near to the LORD, sanctify themselves, lest the LORD break forth upon them.

23 And Moses said unto the LORD, The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai: for thou chargedst us, saying, Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it.

24 And the LORD said unto him, Away, get thee down, and thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee: but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the LORD, lest he break forth upon them.

25 So Moses went down unto the people, and spake unto them.

~ The giving of the law was not some pleasant and nice experience. When God gave His Law, it was an awful event! What do you find beautiful in the giving of the law? God told Moses to rope off an area and keep the people away, so they didn't end up dead; because He intended to execute anyone coming near the Mount. That doesn't sound very lovely; that sounds awful! Vindictive, even. This is no circus parade going down the street with cute animals and pretty girls on display; this is the dispensation of the law of a Holy God, friends - one that you can't keep. This was a terrifying experience these people were having at the time in which we are studying.

Many of them, naturally, wanted to see what was happening. They thought they might see something Moses saw; and some did - and they died! God also says that no man hath seen God at any time! Well, we'll work that out Scripturally soon enough. Here, our Spiritual Safari arrives at the actual giving of the law. The Ten Commandments is not all of it, by any means, of course. Leviticus is even more of the law. Deuteronomy looks like more law but is the interpretation of law after forty years experience with it in the desert. Numbers will give us some new laws, too. When people say they keep the law what they generally mean is the Ten Commandments. That is really such a small part of it that saying "... I keep the law" is too broad and vague to have any real meaning. Anyways, our next report has the commandments and the order for an altar; and they go together, by the way. God demands an altar for a sacrifice to be offered upon. There must be the shedding of blood for the remission of sins ~

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