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Sermon Notes

Term – Spring 2020

Series – Guided by the Fire

Gathering & Date – 11.00 Livestream, 26 April

Title – ‘... he has become my salvation’

Preacher – Paul Langham

Reading – As we Journey with God’s Old Testament people in an unknown season and an unfamiliar place, we’re going to consider lessons from the most significant desert journey in scripture. You can read it the story in Exodus 12 – 40. **Our reading today** is Exodus 15: 1-6, 11-13, 17-18, 22-27

FOUR TOUGH QUESTIONS

Exodus 15:1-6, 11-13, 17-18

Does a good God make bad things happen?

- what does it mean for God to be sovereign?
- what does the biblical account of creation tell us about God’s design for human life?
- how does the language of ‘consequence’ help us?
- how do we respond to the idea of God’s judgment?

What about the ‘innocent’ victims of those bad things?

- beneath the question of human suffering lurks the question, ‘Is God Fair?’; and beneath that, the question, ‘Can I trust him?’
- why is ‘innocence’ the wrong word to use?
- why is it important that God is a God of Justice?
- why does it matter that God is fair?
- why do the early chapters of Exodus give such detail about God’s conversation with Pharaoh through Moses and Aaron?

Exodus 15:22-27

What place does lament have in our faith today?

- what do we do when life tastes bitter?
- why shouldn’t we worry about being brutally honest with God?

What does Jehovah Rapha mean for us today?

- is it even right to speak of God’s supernatural healing in a time of widespread death?
- why is it necessary not to hide away from this aspect of God’s character?
- what do we learn from what God says to his people in v. 26?:
 - if you listen carefully (the Hebrew simply repeats the word ‘hear’ twice = give earnest heed) to the Lord your God Hebrew = to the sound / voice)
 - and do what is right in his eyes
 - if you pay attention (Heb = give ear) to his commandments
 - and keep (watch, preserve) his decrees
 - I will I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, who heals you (Jehovah Rapha)

Note the similarity with 2 Chronicles 7:14

if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

listen carefully to the voice of God: it is vital that we attend to the voice rather than the silence of scripture

Exodus 15:2

*'The Lord is my strength and my defence;
he has become my salvation.
He is my God, and I will praise him,
my father's God, and I will exalt him.*

I'm fascinated that Moses, who had met God and spoken with him, now says that God 'has become my salvation.' It makes me wonder who needs to know that for the first time and how many of us need to know it in a new or deeper way in this season.

Last week, Chris spoke about the God who puts himself in the middle for us, most clearly on the Cross. He reminded us that Jesus was

crucified ... along with the criminals – one on his right, the other on his left. Luke 23:33

How easy is it for God to become our salvation? Read Luke 23:32-43 for the answer. This may help us with our questions about those who suffer and even die without evidently knowing Jesus (e.g. the Egyptian soldiers in today's reading). I take confidence from this passage in Luke that I can trust God with the lives and souls of every person who has ever lived – God will be fair; and his heart is so very clearly to save all he can:

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Romans 10:13

In what ways does God need to become your salvation?

- In a new way?
- For the first time?
- To a greater extent?
- To the exclusion of other defence and refuge?

FOR PRAYER

The varying manifestations of God's tremendous healing power as Jehovah-Rapha can be found in the following biblical passages to combat the following:

Sickness and infirmity: Psalm 41:3

mental affliction: Jonah 2:5-7

Spiritual fatigue: Psalm 23:3

Forgiveness as healing: Psalm 103:3 who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases

Emotional suffering: Psalm 147:3

Anxiety or worry: John 14:27

The word from a member of the church family sent to me this week:

I was thinking about tomorrow's service and amidst the good news of our faith I wondered if we needed to address the idea of lament that is so prominent in the Bible?

If this chimes with your thinking then take it as a confirmation and if not please ignore!

I know of people struggling within our community and I felt God say to tell people to be bold and ask for what you need and I will provide. I don't feel brave enough to say this publicly but we are told to ask and he says he will provide.