
Day 26 - January 26

Establishment of a Nation (1525 - 1400 BCE)

Passover and the Exodus

Readings: *Exodus 13:17-15:21*

Reflections:

- Israel, although armed to fight, is not actually ready for a fight. So God takes them on a longer route through the desert so that they can avoid the Philistines. This demonstrates how God often works with us when we are not ready to face challenges. He takes us on a path we can manage but sometimes it means we are in the desert for longer periods of time. People will ask, “Why am I in this desert time?” The answer may be because you are too weak in your faith at this point to fight some of the big battles that need to be fought in advancing the kingdom. God is getting you there but taking the long road.
- Joseph’s bones come with them. Later, the hope of resurrection will become very important to Israel. Joseph’s bones being buried in the Promised Land not only symbolizes him being buried in the peace of the Promised Land, Canaan, but also being with his people at the resurrection.
- God manifests himself in a cloud and in fire. God's desire to reveal himself to his people takes a huge step forward. Remember up until this point there was no visible sign of the reality of God, there was just Moses and God working through Moses. People are just in the early phases of actually trusting God and as we will see they quickly turn to unbelief. Now there is a sign of his presence which you think would seal the confidence of their faith but it doesn't. Signs and wonders do not produce faith.
- God commands Moses to camp by the sea, in essence, to back the Israelites into a corner, to bait Pharaoh to come and attack them. Interesting that at this time, God destroying Pharaoh and his army is a way for God to reveal his glory to Egypt. The Israelites are terrified and God has not explained the whole situation. He expects them just to trust him.
- We see the statement, “Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance of the Lord.” The reality was that they had every reason to be afraid. They had very little history with God or Moses and they were about to be overrun by the world’s most powerful army. Yet God still expected them not to be afraid because he was with them.

- It is fascinating to note the relocation of the angel of the Lord to stop the advance of the army for one night to allow Israel to rest before they pass through the sea. It shows how the Lord shielded them. Also note that from the pillar comes out darkness on one side and light on the other. This is a great insight into the presence of God showing how those who oppose God encounter darkness and those who seek God experience light. Unbelief leads to darkness, faith leads to light. This will reappear very clearly in Jesus' ministry and his use of light as an illustration of being able to see because of faith in God (e.g. healing the blind man – John 9).
- God does do the miracle of parting the waters. The Israelites had to journey by faith to get to the place of miracle. It went from looking like the worst situation to the best situation overnight. This is similar to Jesus, the cross and the resurrection. It takes faith to walk through something this frightful and still trust God that the waters will open to bring your deliverance, not close in on you and become your grave. Dying in the water was one of the greatest fears of the Israelites. See Jonah and the great fish or Peter walking on the water (Matthew 14:30) as examples of stories about this great fear. God made them walk through the thing they feared the most.
- As the Egyptians pursue the Israelites in the last watch of the night, God throws the Egyptians into confusion and causes the wheels to come off so that they could not escape. Then the sea wipes them out in response to Moses acting as God commands. It is an interesting picture of judgment again. Did God throw Satan into confusion at the time of the cross?
- God wanted the Israelites to trust not only him but also his servant Moses. God wanted to help the people trust him through Moses. Similarly, we trust God the Father through believing in Jesus. God turns trust into a personal relationship.