

**He Brought Us out From There
That He Might Bring Us In
EASTER April 12, 2020**

*“Then He brought us out from there, that He might bring us in, to give us the land of which He swore to our fathers.”
Deuteronomy 6:23*

In the late 1990s, I worked in the wastewater business, just down the road here in Gulf Gate. I was the lead operator of the plant owned by Florida Cities Water Company. It was a private company, which owned wastewater plants throughout Florida, and it ran them well. Private industry can make a good profit off of such things while paying well and giving great service to their customers at low costs.

Eventually, as always seems to be the case with intrusive government, Sarasota County decided they wanted a monopoly on the wastewater business within its borders. They already had several plants which they owned and operated. The service was not as good, the pay was not as high, and the cost to the customers was higher – all in all, it was a typical government project.

Seeing how much Florida Cities made in profit, the county greedily wanted to take them over as well so that it could be added into their profits for the commissioners to spend as they wished. And so, they eventually dug their hands into Florida Cities and forced them to sell off their Sarasota plants.

Having spent nine years, four months, and fifteen days in government service in the United States Air Force, it was obvious what was coming – waste, incompetence, and frustration for anyone who desired to do an honest day’s work while watching those around him take advantage of the system to do as little as possible.

Knowing what was ahead, and before the transfer to the county, I left that employ and headed to Alaska to mine gold for the summer. The location I went to was on the Fortymile River a bit south and east of Fairbanks, and directly on the US/Canada border.

The spot is so remote that the nearest town, Chicken Alaska, which had a year-round population of nine, was up the river seventeen miles, and then a four-hour drive away. If you Google the location, you can delight yourself in the remoteness of the land and the beauty of the spot. There are bears, beavers, and mosquitoes in abundance.

There, at the claim working from day to day, one would not know if the rest of the world had collapsed, gone into nuclear war, or been destroyed by pestilence. There were no radios, there was no internet, and there was no way to contact the outside world apart from an emergency beacon if someone was in need of immediate medical attention.

For me, I was brought out of a situation of impending doom, and into a place of beauty, riches, and delight – not heaven, but compared to staying on with Sarasota County, it was close to paradise. For the residents of Gulf Gate and the employees who stayed with the county, the service went down, the utility prices went up, and the pay of Sarasota County became the standard.

Text Verse: “...being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.” Philippians 1:6

After coming home from Alaska, I did various jobs. One was working right across the road from my house, restoring an old motel on the island. The travel to work took all of ten seconds, I worked alone, and the pay – though not great – was enough to make the day worth the work.

After a while, I started a retail business just down the road from here and enjoyed a couple years of that. During the time there, and through the Lord’s sure hand of Providence, my heart was turned toward Him, and a hunger for the word of God, the Holy Bible, consumed me.

Eventually, I had to close the store. I could no longer sell Buddha’s and other things people would take home and pray to. It bothered me to even put the key in the door each morning. But what to do when you have a wife and two children?

At that time, I got a call from Siesta Key Utilities Authority – the wastewater plant on the island I live on, and one which I had worked at in high school. My old boss said he needed to fill a position and he wanted to interview me.

I said, “Thanks Art, but I never kept up my license, and so I can’t be an operator.” He said, “We already checked, your license doesn’t expire for thirty more days. If you come in, we will pay for the necessary courses, and for the renewal of your license.”

As incredible as it seems, the Lord had directed the events of my life to get me out of one sore spot, and to lead me into a good job, with good pay, and which was right down the road from my house. While there, Art eventually retired, and I took over as the lead operator of the utility. It was a sweet deal, great hours, amazing pay, a company car, and the best crew one could imagine working with.

However, the company was under obligation to be transferred – lock, stock, and barrel – to... Sarasota County on a set date which had been agreed upon many, many years earlier. I was asked to stay during the transfer, which I did, but eventually I left the keys on the desk one day and told them it was enough.

You see, the service went down, the utility prices went up, and anyone who desired to do a good job was left to do it alone. Not all county employees are this way, but it is the norm. The one who desires to do an honest day's work is the exception. With the transfer of the utility complete, I left there, finished my degree at Southern Evangelical Seminary, and was ordained as a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ on 24 January of 2010.

For me, I was brought out of a situation of impending doom, and into a place of beauty, riches, and delight – not heaven, but compared to staying on with Sarasota County, it is close to paradise.

I. And He Brought Us out From There

Today is Resurrection Day, 12 April 2020. The world is in turmoil, pestilence – real or imagined – fills the land, and the anxiety and stress level of the people of the world is exceedingly high. This isn't just in our own nation, but it permeates much of the world.

Normally, to be a missionary in an isolated part of the world would be considered something only the hardiest and most dedicated souls would venture out to do. Like going into the middle of nowhere to mine gold, it may be that they have no contact with anyone for extended periods. But today, it seems that a such a choice is not only the smart one, more so – it seems like the wise one.

To be taken out of our present distress, and to be placed in a location where none of this is even considered, would be a delight and a relief. Like my time on the Fortymile, some of our missionaries are simply living their lives, sharing their knowledge of Jesus Christ, and have very little care about how the rest of the world has devolved into a state of near lunacy.

To them, those things are behind and are forgotten as they reach forward to those things which are ahead. For those of us who are sequestered away in our homes, we are living in a new reality which seems to consume our very existence.

In this, we have a choice. We can be fearful, selfish, anxious, and stressed, or we can – as mature and faithful followers of Jesus Christ – submit to Him, place our trust and hope in Him, and stand faithfully on the knowledge that He has brought us out.

For those who have followed the sermons from Genesis through until Deuteronomy, the patterns have become increasingly clear as God continually weaves the lives and events of real human beings, who really existed, into the model and plan of redemption which He has revealed – and which He continues to reveal – in the stream of human existence.

Using Israel as a template, or pattern, for what He would do in and through Christ for humanity, God brought this particular group of people out of the bondage of slavery under a harsh and brutal taskmaster and unto Himself. The redemption of Israel from Egypt is a type, or picture, of the redemption of man from the bondage of sin and the control of the devil to the freedom of God in Christ.

But Israel wasn't just brought out and granted entrance into the Promise. That would have been insufficient to meet God's goals and purposes for humanity. As He says in Isaiah –

*“And now the LORD says,
Who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant,
To bring Jacob back to Him,
So that Israel is gathered to Him
(For I shall be glorious in the eyes of the LORD,
And My God shall be My strength),
⁶ Indeed He says,
'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant
To raise up the tribes of Jacob,
And to restore the preserved ones of Israel;*

*I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles,
That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.”* Isaiah 49:6, 7

No, what the Lord God did in, through, and for, Israel is only a small part of what He had determined to do for all of the people of the world. He brought Israel out of Egypt as a typological foreshadowing of His bringing us out from the power of the devil.

But God didn't just bring Israel out of Egypt. He brought them out of Egypt and to Himself at Mount Sinai. It is the fulfillment of a promise made to Moses there on that same mountain. Moses was uncertain of his abilities, and he was fearful of the appointment –

*But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?”
12 So He said, “I will certainly be with you. And this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”* Exodus 3:11, 12

The Lord said that he would bring them out, and He did. He kept His word and Israel was redeemed from the bondage. In this, He brought them to Himself, carrying them along until they arrived at the sacred mountain. When Israel arrived, however, they quickly realized the terrifying nature of this awesome and holy God.

In presenting to them the basis of His law, the Ten Commandments, the people were terrified. The reason must be two-fold, although we normally only consider one aspect of the event –

“And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. 18 Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. 19 And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice.” Exodus 19:17-19

During this terrifying display, the Lord thundered forth His commandments to the people – You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. Honor your father and your mother. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness. You shall not covet.

From the intensity of the display, and at the giving of the word, the people's natural and obvious response is recorded –

“Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar off. 19 Then they said to Moses, ‘You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.’” Exodus 20:18, 19

This is the obvious, and first, reason the people were terrified. The splendor of the Lord was too great for them to behold and listen to. Relief was needed, or they would die. But there is a second reason they should have been terrified, and it is the reason for the display of the Lord in the first place.

It is because the word of the Lord, the demand of the law, and, therefore, the expectation of what would occur if the demand of the law was not met, was now a reality to them. The law cannot be separated from the Lawgiver. The former is an absolute and perfect revelation of the latter. The nature of the Lawgiver is revealed in His law.

If Israel was terrified of the sight which they beheld, which was only a mere demonstration of His power, then how much more terrified should they have been of the words which issued forth from Him!

The words were not merely a demonstration of His power, they are an exact reflection of His nature. To violate His word is to come under His judgment. The power on display was to alert them to this, and to bring them to understand what the consequences of violating His nature would then be – “What you have seen at the giving of My word is terrifying, because I am terrifying when you violate My word.”

Israel had been brought out of a terrible bondage. The yoke they bore was heavy and it afflicted their bodies until their bodies were broken and cast away while others would come and assume the burdens they could no longer bear.

But Israel had been brought into actually a greater bondage than they had left. They had been brought under the yoke of the law. The taskmaster they were now to serve would not merely break their bodies, consigning them to the pit of death, but it would break their souls, consigning them to the pit of hell.

If it were not for provisions within the law which accompanied the giving of these Ten Commandments – which form the basis of the law – none could have been saved. No not even one. But in the law came mercy. The Lord gave Israel a system of sacrifices to atone for their wrongdoings, and to provide remission of their sins.

These provisions were offered through the Lord's grace, and through His grace alone. The people had agreed to the covenant, in advance, and they had done so without any such provision agreed to at that point.

In Exodus 24:7, at the renewing of the covenant, and before much of the law had been brought to the ears of the people, the word says, *v'yomeru kol asher dibber Yehovah naaseh v'nishma* – “*And they said, all that has said Yehovah, we will do and we will hear.*” The promise to do came *before* the promise to hear. Israel had agreed to their own new, and more comprehensive, bondage.

Thus, any infraction of the law is the fault of the people and is deserving of the entire weight and penalty of the law. Thus, any atonement for, or remission of, the sins of the people is then – by default – an act of grace. They would receive what they did not deserve. It would further be an act of mercy – they would not receive what they did deserve.

The bondage of Israel was complete at that time, even if the scope of it was not understood. But freedom within the law was also revealed – a lamb for this sin, a goat for that sin, and a bull for this sin. There were grain offerings and fat offerings. There were offerings at certain times of the day, and there were offerings for certain days.

The whole system was set up to provide relief from the terror of the bondage that the people were in. And of all of these sacrifices and offerings, they together culminated in several special offerings – that of the red heifer and that of the Day of Atonement.

These, and any other particular offerings, were given for particular reasons and for special release from the burden of the law. Through them, the Lord would bring them out of the bondage they were in. But each of these special offerings required something exceptional as well. They required faith.

For the Day of Atonement, it says in Leviticus 23:28, 29 –

“And you shall do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God. 29 For any person who is not afflicted in soul on that same day shall be cut off from his people.” Leviticus 23:28, 29

On this momentous and august day, which came each year, they were to do nothing but rest and afflict their souls. But this was totally up to them. They would be scattered throughout the land of Israel, and for many, nobody but they alone would know if they had actually refrained from work and food, and if they had also actively afflicted their souls.

In other words, this Day of days was a day of faith. It would be between their hearts and God. Would they come by faith in their minds to Jerusalem and accept the atoning sacrifice which was being made for them? Or would they continue on in their own futile attempts at pleasing God and/or just living life without regard to Him, ignoring His word, and trusting in their own supposed righteousness?

Likewise, with the sprinkling of the water of purification from the red heifer, the person had to stand and allow himself to be sprinkled. The word used there for the action is not the normal word for sprinkling that was found elsewhere in the same passage.

Rather, the word *zaraq*, a scattering, is used. It is the scattering which is caused by a sprinkling. And more, in the Hebrew the word is passive, not active. A more literal translation would say something like the person “received as a scattering on him.”

To be purified, the person had to receive what was to be done. It could not be obtained by self, but it had to be imparted by another; no works of his own were involved.

Each sacrificial allowance was given to Israel to bring them out of the bondage they were in. If the requirements of the rite which accompanied the sacrifice or offering were met, release from the infraction of the law was realized in the person.

In this, then, the Lord could say, “I have brought you out.” He didn't need to provide these avenues of release, and being a codified law, only these avenues of release were acceptable. The parameters of the law are found within the law, not within any change or addition to it by the recipients of the law.

It is an important point to understand. When a covenant is made, and when the parameters are set, no man may add to it, and no man may annul it, except as defined within the covenant itself.

With this understanding, the law – though providing release for individual infractions – remained a bondage to the people, even in their times of release. How is this? It is because the provisions of the law were only as good as the committing of a new infraction.

The requirements of the law still stood and for each new infraction, a new and separate release was required. And more, the annual Day of Atonement was just that. It was annual. It implied that none under the law had met the demands of the law. Though the Lord would bring them out from the infractions, He did not bring them out of the bondage of the law. At least, not through their actions under the law.

However, He was not only able to bring them out of their infractions, but He was also able to bring them out of their bondage. This is what the message of Scripture speaks to, and it is what all of Scripture is directed to. The Lord would bring them out, and it was for a reason. That reason was that He might bring us in.

*I have brought you out, My beloved redeemed
The burdens of the past are no more
Please do not doubt, as if I had schemed
To only bring you to a closed Door*

*Rather, you have been brought out, and I shall care for you
Each step of the way is a step with Me at your side
Trust that I will do what I have promised to do
As on eagle's wings you now currently ride*

*You shall be carried through to the end
And on a day that I have set for you
For your soul I will send
And through the Door, I will carry you through*

II. That He Might Bring Us In

The Thursday before typing this sermon, I said to Berk Carrico, before Bible study, that I wanted to present something to you all that was different than a normal sermon.

Rather than pick apart a passage which obviously looks to Christ and which could then be used to deepen your theology, I thought that the state of the times we are living in necessitated a word to you that would build you up and give you confidence before the Lord and in your own hearts and souls.

Berk excitedly quoted Deuteronomy 6:23 because it was fresh on his mind from having read it that day, “Then He brought us out from there, that He might bring us in, to give us the land of which He swore to our fathers.” In his usually excited way, he then repeated, “He brought us out, that He might bring us in.” Yes, that will do. Thank you, Berk.

The Lord didn't just bring Israel out of Egypt in order to bring them into another permanent form and type of bondage. No, the law is merely an incidental step on the way to bringing them in. But into what? The answer is, “Their inheritance.”

Canaan was the immediate promise and the Lord would fulfill what He had promised. But, for any who have followed the sermons on the books of Moses, Canaan is not an end in and of itself. It is not the true goal. Rather, it is only a picture of something far more expansive and glorious.

The author of Hebrews tells us this. He goes through several chapters of discourse concerning God's promised rest. He cites the 95th Psalm which spoke of Israel's rebellion in the wilderness –

*“Today, if you will hear His voice:
8 “Do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion,
As in the day of trial in the wilderness,
9 When your fathers tested Me;
They tried Me, though they saw My work.
10 For forty years I was grieved with that generation,
And said, ‘It is a people who go astray in their hearts,
And they do not know My ways.’
11 So I swore in My wrath,
‘They shall not enter My rest.’” Psalm 95:7-11*

It was a rebellion that brought about a denial of entry into Canaan for that entire generation. Only when all those who had rebelled were dead, would Israel enter the land. But in his citation of the Psalm he wisely, and carefully, again notes David's first words, "Today, if you will hear His voice."

If David speaks of entering the Lord's rest, and if he lived hundreds of years after Israel entered Canaan, then Israel's entering Canaan could not have been an entrance into His promised rest. As He says –

"For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day." Hebrews 4:8

Joshua did bring Israel into Canaan, and yet Joshua did not bring them into the rest. Therefore, the promise of entering His rest must have still stood, and Israel must still have remained in bondage at that time. One plus one will always equal two in proper theology.

And so how can one enter God's rest? The law was intended to bring life. As Moses said to the people after finishing his final discourse, and just before ascending Mount Nebo to die, he specifically told them –

"Set your hearts on all the words which I testify among you today, which you shall command your children to be careful to observe—all the words of this law. ⁴⁷ For it is not a futile thing for you, because it is your life, and by this word you shall prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to possess." Deuteronomy 32:46, 47

Moses said that through obedience to the law life could come. In its fulfillment, one could expect life. It is a truth that the Lord had told them almost forty years earlier –

"You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I am the LORD." Leviticus 18:5

But we have already seen that no man could do the things of the law. It is clearly implied in the Day of Atonement rites. One MUST observe the rite because the person had offended the awesome, terrifying, and glorious Lord who had spoken out the law which they had broken.

But more specifically, and to the point at hand, every person who was under the law died. With one exception, Elijah, who was taken to heaven for a set purpose, all of them died. But the law promised that the person who did the things of the law would live. And yet, they all died.

The testimony to the people's failure stands as a witness against them. Were it not for the mercy of the Lord, they would not only have died, but they would have perished as well. But even under the law, the promise of life for those who died under the law is seen. That is found, for example, in Daniel 12. There the word says –

*"And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake,
Some to everlasting life,
Some to shame and everlasting contempt." Daniel 12:2*

The hope of the redeemed of Israel is the hope of man's promise – everlasting life. The Lord had brought them out to bring them in. And the Lord through the giving of His Son, has brought us out so that He may bring us in.

God's promise of life, however, did not come at a small cost. Rather, it came in the giving of His Son for us. Though man in general could not meet the demands of the law, a Man in particular could. He was to be a special Man, a perfect Man – a Man without sin.

The Lord God Himself, united with His own creation to bring about what He had purposed. The Holy Spirit overshadowed a young Jewish girl, and in her womb, God united with humanity. Thus, the child is fully God, being born of God, and fully Human, being born of the seed of man.

But this union came about through a person bound under the constraints of the law. The very bondage which Israel stood under is the bondage to which God subjected Himself to. The Child – Jesus – was born under the law, but without the limitations of other men.

With God as His Father, He was born without sin. And thus, He was qualified to fulfill the law. No other man was, because all were already born with sin. Jesus, however, had no such constraint on Him. Being qualified to doing so, however, He still had to prove Himself capable.

The demands of the law had to be met, perfectly and entirely. But Moses said, “He brought us out from there, that He might bring us in.” The process had been initiated, and so the process must come to its completion.

This is the purpose of the gospels. They are given to show that not only did Christ come, but that He came for us. Whether the world at large is under the law or not, the world at large will be judged by the law. The reason this is so, is because the law is God’s standard.

The same holy God who spoke forth the Ten Commandments will have all flesh stand before Him for judgment. The demand of the law – perfection – will be the standard, and those who fail to meet that demand will be removed from His presence, forever.

One can perish apart from the law, or one can perish under the law, but the law reflects the nature of God. This is what Christ came to fulfill – God’s standard. And this is what He did. Jesus Christ was born under the law – without sin. Jesus Christ lived under the law – as testified to in the gospels – without sin. And Christ died under the law – without sin.

The terrifying display of God, which Israel begged to no longer hear, came from God who is truly angry at sin. The anger of God, for the sin of the world was directed to His own beloved Son. Not because He had sinned, but because you have sinned; we have sinned. Jesus Christ’s death was not for Himself, but for us.

In having accomplished this, the law was fulfilled. The terms of the covenant were met in Him, and thus the penalty of the law ended in Him. How can we know that this is so? It is because of what the Lord said – “which if a man does, he shall live by them.” And it is what Moses repeated – “it is your life.”

If Jesus Christ had not done the things of the law, He would be in the same place where all the multitudes of Israel who came before Him still are to this day. He would have remained in the pit of death and corruption. But such is not the case.

The reason we are here today, is because this Man – born under the law, who lived under the law, and who died because of the law – came out of the grave, proving He fulfilled the law. In Him is life because He embodies the law. In His death, the law died with Him.

As He embodies the law, then He embodies all of the law, including the Day of Atonement, and the purification of the red heifer. He is the Day – our Day – of Atonement. And, He is the Water of Purification – our source of cleansing from sin. And as both of those had to be accepted and received by faith, so does the cleansing and atonement of Christ.

God does not make salvation difficult for us, but the terms of the New Covenant are set and cannot be procured in any way other than how He has determined. One must believe what God did in Jesus Christ, He must receive that offering by faith, and He must receive it apart from any personal merit. We come with empty hands and we procure what God has done.

This is the marvel of Resurrection Day. It is the day where the hope of man – since the moment of the fall of our first father – is realized. The Lord God brought Israel out in order to bring them in. And along with Israel, He said –

*“It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant
To raise up the tribes of Jacob,
And to restore the preserved ones of Israel;
I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles,
That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.” Isaiah 49:7*

The whole world has the Door opened to them for the forgiveness of sin and for the purification of all unrighteousness, if they will just but believe. If they will just reach out and receive.

*Have I left you after the work I have begun?
Would I abandon you after only a part of the way?
What would be the point in the giving of My Son
If I were to abandon you now? Tell Me, I pray*

*I have not brought you just part of the way
To then leave you wandering in a wilderness
Believe the past words when I did say
That I will bring you in, and your soul I will bless*

*The Door lies yet ahead, but it remains ever open to you
Because you started in faith, believing in My Son*

*And through that Door, I shall see you through
I shall complete the task. Yes, it shall be done*

*Have faith in Me when things are rough
The end for you is secure; your faith is enough*

III. Not Just Part of the Way

The Lord God said that He had brought Israel out that He might bring them in. We then saw that the land He promised to bring them into was not the promised Rest of which He had spoken. Like the law itself, it was only a step on the way to the promise.

Paul, in the book of Galatians, says that the law was a tutor to lead us to Christ. God brought Israel into the law to teach them (and us!) of our desperate need for Christ. In coming to Christ, the Promise is found, and the Rest is realized. That is stated explicitly in Hebrews 4:3 with the words, “For we who have believed do enter that rest.”

If you have trusted Jesus with your eternal soul, the victory is won, and the battle is complete. The promise is realized. Oh! How joyfully we sing of the great redemption, of the blood, and of the cross. We rejoice in the mighty working of God, so sure of our salvation and of the glory which lies ahead.

And yet...

How fearful are you today? How anxious are you of the events surrounding you? How discouraged are you at being shut up in your home, unable to go out, lacking toilet paper because someone who cares less about others than he does about the backside of his own body has, through hoarding, deprived you of this temporary comfort?

Who is it that has pains in his body, and who questions the Lord’s goodness because of it? Who is it that says the Lord must not love him because his dog was killed? Which one of us will question God’s goodness when his finances are lost through the current crisis, or because a hacker came online and cleaned out his account?

Is there someone here who wonders why God so unfairly allowed the coronavirus to come and steal away his life of ease instead of taking him out at the rapture. The nerve of God to leave me like this! Who would talk this way? Who would think this way?

Is the rest of your life, after the victory you have received, supposed to be one of luxury, ease, and paths of rose petals? The Lord God has brought us out so that He may bring us in. He didn’t say that He would start bringing us in and then stop short along the way.

Why would God go through four thousand years of preparation, of meticulous recording of human history, of working through Israel and the law, and of the giving of His Son – think of it! – the giving of His Son to bring us out, just to fail in bringing us in?

Are we so faithless in ourselves that our faith will get us *to* Christ, but not to truly dwell *in* Christ? We started in faith; shall we now expect sight? We have the word; shall we now demand more?

Rather, the victory in Christ is a victory which asks us to trust that what happens to us is not out of His control. It is a victory which belongs to us as an inheritance and it is both ours, and it must be waited upon.

We have come here today to celebrate the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ – giving God the glory for what He has done. But we diminish that glory every time we allow our personal circumstances to stand above the significance of what Christ did for us.

When we lose hope because of some worldly affliction, pain, trial, sadness, pestilence, or famine, we are putting the test of this world above our faith in the next. Let us remember always that the Lord – our Lord Jesus Christ – brought us out, so that He might bring us in.

He took the terror of the law, with all of its associated punishments for disobedience, upon Himself. He took all of God’s wrath concerning all of the sin in human existence upon Himself. And He died so that we could meet the demands of the law in Him and thus... live.

The sin-debt is paid, the pardon is granted, and the everlasting life *has* begun. It isn't that it will start some nebulously placed day in our future. No, it has begun – right at the moment we received Jesus Christ. The joys of eternal life apart from this present life may be yet ahead, but the JOY of eternal life – even during this life – should ever be with us.

Don't lose heart, don't be fearful, don't be discouraged, and be anxious for nothing. But rather, "in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6, 7)

Each of us is bound to suffer. Each of us is bound to mourn. Each of us is bound to be burdened in heart and in soul. But each of us is to remain hopeful and hope-filled through those things. This, rather than diminishing the glory of the cross of Jesus Christ, will add to its glory.

God sent His Son on a mission of love and mercy, and God now asks you to remain faithful to the pronouncement you made when you first called out to Him to receive the Gift and to be called into His brilliantly glorious light. God has brought you out, so that He might (and indeed will) bring you in.

Have faith, be encouraged in the Lord, and be filled with the peace and calm of life in Jesus Christ – to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Closing Verse: *"Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. ⁹ The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you." Philippians 4:8, 9*

Next Week: Deuteronomy 1:34-46 When done there, a new direction will come, happy and fresh... (Many Days in Kadesh) (5th Deuteronomy Sermon)

A Celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

This is the gospel which was preached to you
It is also the one you received and on which you stand
It is the gospel of salvation, providing life that's new
And which will carry you to the promised Holy Land

What is delivered to you is what was before received
That Christ died for our sins according to God's word
He was buried and He rose, and so we have believed
And many witnesses testify to this message you have heard

Now, if Christ is preached that He is risen from the dead
How can some among you say the resurrection isn't true?
If there is no resurrection after Christ was crucified and bled
Then our faith as well as yours is certainly askew

And if so, we are found false witnesses of God
Because we have wrongly testified of this mighty deed
And our faith is futile, no heavenly streets we'll trod
And we are still dead in our sins; fallen Adam's seed

Even more, those who have fallen asleep in the Lord are gone
And we are the most pitiable creatures
-----the world could ever look upon

But indeed, Christ is risen from the dead
He is the Firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep
And as death came through one man, Adam, our federal head
So, Christ will make all alive; our souls He will keep

But there is an order to the Resurrection call
Christ was first, the pattern for the rest when He comes
When He does, He will make a shout out to us all
And we will rise as if to the sound of heavenly battle drums

Then comes the time, when He delivers the kingdom to the Father
When all rule, authority, and power have come to an end
The last enemy to be destroyed is death, never more to bother
Then the Son will to the Father eternal rule extend

But you ask, what will we be like after our time of sleep?
After we have been buried in corruption's pit so deep?

Our body is sown in dishonor, but it will be raised in glory
It is sown in weakness, but raised in power – the resurrection story

The first man Adam became a living being, it is true
The last Adam became a life-giving Spirit, life to me and you

And as was the man of dust, created so long ago
So are those likened unto him, also made of dust
And as is the Man, the Lord from heaven, you know
That we shall bear His image for eternity just as we've discussed

Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God
Nor can corruption inherit that which is incorrupt
Be we shall all be changed, and so, heavenly streets we'll trod
In the twinkling of an eye, the change will be abrupt

When the last trumpet sounds, we will be taken to glory
We shall all be changed, completion of the gospel story

Where O Death, O where is your sting
When Christ our Savior, us to Himself does He bring

Where O Hades, O where is your victory
When Christ translates His children to eternal glory

The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin the law
But thanks be to God who gives us victory through our Lord
My beloved brethren be steadfast in all you've heard and saw
And cling confidently to God's eternal word

Know for certain that your labor is not in vain
Be of good cheer, Christ is coming again

Hallelujah and Amen...