

MY NAME IS IN HIM

EXODUS 23: 20-25

08-02-2009

The New Testament is a biography of Jesus Christ, which was, according to 2 Peter 1:21 written by *“holy men of old who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”* The four gospels set forth his birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father in glory. The Acts of the Apostles set forth the establishment of the early church in *“Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.”*(Acts 1:8) The Epistles set forth the doctrines of grace he established by his perfect obedience under the Law of God and death on the cross. The Revelation of John sets forth those things, which must *“shortly come to pass,”* (Revelation 1:1) *“when all things are fulfilled.”*

Godsø purpose in all this, stated in 2 Corinthians 4:6 is that *“we might behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”* God the Holy Spirit has filled the pages of the New Testament with the words and works of Christ.

What about the Old Testament? Where is Christ in prophecy? We know all prophecy pictures in shadows and types His Person and work in salvation. We know that as God-Man, co-equal with the Father in every attribute of Deity, he always is and ever will be. According to Hebrews 13:8, he is *“the same yesterday, today and forever.”* Revelation 22:13 declares him to be *“the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.”* But, how did he impact life preceding his incarnation? Much, in every way.

We have Gods testimony in John 1: 1-3, that *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”* Christ was engaged in the creation, providence, and the salvation of his elect. He engaged himself in the affairs of our salvation when he entered with the Father into the everlasting covenant of grace. As the eternal unchanging God, he took on himself the Suretyship of his people in that covenant, making it necessary for him to come in time and satisfy all the conditions of that covenant. He was not silent nor inactive from the establishment of the covenant of grace made before time until his incarnation in time but was actively engaged in the Fathers work in all things pertaining to his glory from the beginning.

In Exodus 3:2 he encounters Moses through a burning bush. 1 Corinthians 10:4 declares him to be the Rock from which Israel drank in the wilderness. He overshadowed the tabernacle in the wilderness with his Shenikah glory, manifested by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. By it he led the children of Israel forty years. When the cloud moved, Israel broke camp and moved with it. When it stopped, Israel rested. (Exodus 40:36) There are many preincarnate manifestations of Christ in the Old Testament.

One such is recorded for us in Exodus 23: 20-25. In Verse 21 God makes this declaration: *“for my name is in him,”* i.e., my glory is in this Angel. God has entrusted His reputation, everything he is as a just God and Savior to this Angel. What is Gods name; JEHOVAH TSIDKENAU, the Lord our Righteousness. This is Christø name. **Jeremiah 23:6:** *“In his days Judah shall be saved. And Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness.”* Exodus 23:21 is the Old Testament equivalent of 2 Corinthians 4:6, where *“God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”* Here we are told that Gods name is in this Angel. In **John 10:38** his claim is this: *“The Father is in me and I in Him.”*

This Angel is Christ for only in Christ is the Father known. This Angel is Christ (**V-22**) because to him alone owe we obedience. *“Obey His voice.”* **Read Acts 5:29.** *“Then Peter and the other Apostles answered and said, we ought to obey God rather than men.”* This Angel is Christ for only God can forgive sins. *“He will not pardon your transgressions.”* **Read V-22.** *“But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries.”* When you obey this Angel, you obey God, for He is God. **Read Malachi 3:1.** *“Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.”* The Hebrew word òMessengerö in Malachi is the same word òAngelö in Exodus 23:20. *“Behold,”* I send Christ before you, in whom is my name, my power, my glory, my righteousness and He will:

1. **Deliver my people.**
2. **Defeat my enemy.**
3. **Defend my honor.** Such is the work of Christ

1. My name is in him who will deliver my people. V20-21

The setting for this experience of Israel is the wilderness of Sinai. God had destroyed the armies of Egypt as they pursued Israel through the Red Sea. Two months into their journey Israel was already murmuring against Moses for the discomforts of wilderness life. Here God gave Moses the Ten Commandments and the covenant laws whereby Israel was to be governed and concludes with the threats and the promises in Exodus 23:20-25.

God's promise in V-20 is two-fold. Christ shall go before thee to:

a. *Keep thee in the way.* Here we have God's promise to keep his own.

Matthew 7:13-14 describes two ways in this world. *“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”*

Proverbs 14:12 describes *“a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”* In Isaiah 53: 6 God describes us as *“sheep gone astray, we have turned every man to his own way.”* At the disciples question in John 14:6, *“how can we know the way,”* Jesus replied, *“I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh to the Father but by me.”*

That God has a way and man another way is not debatable. That all men are either in God's way or man's way is not debatable. That all men will either enter God's REST or perish in the wilderness is not debatable. The question for us today is, in which way am I, and how can I know? Here In Exodus 23: 20, God promises to keep his people in Christ, God's way. I emphasize the word *“keep.”* Keep means to maintain a present possession. God does not have to go and possess a people to keep; he keeps a people he has always possessed. Israel in the wilderness is a type of spiritual Israel.

According to **Exodus 12:38**, *“the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle.”* Some commentators estimate more than two million Israeli men, women and children left Egypt in the exodus. In addition, a mixed multitude went out with them. I believe this *“mixed multitude”* has reference to those God kept in *“the way”* and those left to their own way. Included in this mixed multitude are those who witnessed and participated in the exodus and yet failed to reach God's Rest in Christ.

According to **Hebrews 3:14-19**, they died in the wilderness in unbelief. Why? What made the difference? **V-14**. They failed to “*hold fast their confidence (look to Christ) firm unto the end.*” They left Egypt in a blaze of glory but (**V-16**) “*provoked the Lord,*” (They believed not, V-18). They escaped the physical bondage of Egypt but died in the spiritual bondage of unbelief. They missed the Promised Land; they missed Christ.

What does this observation tell us? There are in some congregations both saved and lost sinners. The parable of the wheat and tares in Matthew 13 proves this to be so. There were in the nation Israel at the exodus those among the saved who were not saved, they were not in THE WAY and we can expect that to be possible even in our congregation. Let us heed God’s warning in Hebrews 4:1 lest we come up short of His REST.

So, what is the way in which some are kept? It is Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life.

What is it to be in Christ? It is to be one with Christ in the view of God’s law and justice. God’s law and justice viewed him as one cursed of God when sin was imputed to him. (**Galatians 3:13**) “*Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.*” Now it views him as holy and righteous based on his perfect satisfaction to law and justice. Likewise those who are in him have perfectly satisfied law and justice in their Surety, Christ Jesus the Lord. They have been freed from the law and cannot be charged because sin cannot be imputed to them, it was imputed to Christ. Not only can they not be charged with sin, they cannot fail to receive all the benefits and blessings of the whole inheritance of grace. Though guilty, defiled and deserving of eternal death based on their fall in Adam and their own resultant personal sin, God would be unjust to withhold any spiritual blessing from them. **Read Ephesians 1:3.** “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.*”

One such blessing is to “*keep them in the Way.*” **They are kept by a:**

1.Representative. Christ stands as the representative of a people chosen and given to him by the Father in the everlasting covenant of grace. He “*ever liveth to make intercession for them.*” He is ever faithful.

2.Redeemer. He who paid their sin debt in full and “*bore their sin in his body on the tree.*” His death guarantees their life for whom he died.

3.Righteousness. That answers every demand of law and justice against every sinner for whom it was established and imputed, that righteousness

which resides in heaven in the Person of Christ and is freely imputed to sinners on earth. They are, to whom Christ is their representative, redeemer and righteousness, according to 1 Peter 1:5, *“kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”* God promised to keep them in the way.

b. **V-20** God promises to *“bring them into the place which I have prepared.”* God promised Abraham a land. Here in V31-33 he sets the bounds of that land. **Read V33.** *“They shall not dwell in thy land.”* Where is this land? It is in Christ, the REST of God. It is that REST most who participated in the exodus from Egypt failed to enter. It is that REST most rejected and provoked the Lord forty years, thus invoking God’s threat in V-21. *“Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions.”* It is that Rest most today reject. God will not forgive the transgression of provoking the Lord. It is the unpardonable sin. Israel provoked God forty years. Over and over they rejected Christ and his righteousness and sought acceptance before God by their law keeping. They refused to believe that all of salvation is conditioned on Christ and his blood and righteousness imputed and God did not bring them into His rest. But he brought some: all he kept in the way. In John 14:2-3, Jesus said, *“I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”* I go to the cross to give my life a ransom for many and I will bring you to rest in my finished work alone. **My name is in him who will deliver my people.** He will keep us in the way and bring us unto a prepared place.

2. **My name is in him who will defeat my enemy.** V22-23

The possession of the Promised Land for Israel was never in question. There was no possibility that they would not possess it. There was no question but that the enemy would be defeated. V-23 names the enemies of Israel. These are they who would stand against Israel to prevent her from the promise land. In **V-23, God** says *“I will cut them off.”* In **V-24, God** says, *“You shall utterly overthrow them.”* What keeps sinners from the REST of God today? The same thing that kept Israel from entering in: UNBELIEF. Unbelief that manifests itself in ignorance, idolatry, self-righteousness, self-love and religious pride. How is this enemy overcome? **Read the “I wills” in V27-30.**

V-27. *“I will send my fear before thee.”* The scriptures say that the nations around Israel trembled and were in anguish at the miracles of God. They

shall hear of the awesome powers and wonders I displayed and shall fear. Many believe that if sinners could see God part the waters of Red Sea they would believe. God's testimony is that most of those who did see it died in unbelief. In the salvation of a sinner, a greater wonder than the parting of the Red Sea is revealed. It is the revelation to the heart and mind of how God can justify the ungodly and remain just in so doing based on the imputed righteousness of His Son. God will send His fear, a reverential respect for the honor of his redemptive glory in salvation before every sinner who enters his rest and they shall fear him. Do you fear Him?

V-27. *"I will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come."* Every enemy you encounter will I destroy. Self-righteousness, self love and religious pride will give way to repentance, humility and gratitude in every sinner who enters into God's rest.

V-27. *"I will make all thine enemies to turn their backs."* (Flee, run, cease their opposition). The unregenerate cannot withstand, they cannot answer the doctrines of grace.

V-28. *"I will send hornets,"* i.e., I will remove every obstacle to the possession of the land I promised to your fathers. Christ accomplished this when he suffered, bled and died on the cross to satisfy law and justice for those who would inherit God's rest. The righteousness he established and God freely imputed to the justification of His people insures that every sinner for whom he died shall enter in and rest. The rest God will destroy.

In V29-30, God reminds us that our walk is a lifelong journey and each day brings new trials and temptations to *"try our faith"* and show us daily our need for Christ and his righteousness. It keeps us looking to Christ for all our salvation. These are the trials that test our faith and will so do until we *"be increased* (until we have run the race of grace) *and we inherit* (Possess) *the land."* (We possess the inheritance, not earn it.) Until we do, ignorance, idolatry, self-righteousness, self-love and religious pride will follow us. But we hold fast our confidence firm unto the end that Christ's righteousness imputed is all our salvation.

My name is in him who will **deliver my people.**

My name is in him who will **defeat my enemies.**

3. My name is in him who will defend my honor. V25. *"And you shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water, and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee."*

This One who delivers my people and defeats my enemies is the Lord our God. He shall bless our bread and water. What is bread and water? It is the

sustenance of life. It is that without which no man can live. **Read John 6:35.** *“And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. And we know, by the testimony of Christ in John 6:37 that, “all that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”* God will bless Christ, our bread and water and he shall not lose one the Father trusted into his hands. **V: 26.** *“There shall nothing cast their young, not be barren in the land.”* Christ will have no stillborn children. Every sinner for whom he died shall be saved. His righteousness established and imputed is God’s warrant to justify and bring to final glory every sinner chosen in him. No sickness of soul or body will be able to separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Christ is the Way. He has a people he has kept in the way and will bring into that land (REST) he has prepared. He has removed every obstacle to their inheritance and in his kingly office rules and reigns to insure their journey ends in victory. This end is sure because God the Father said, “my name is in him, who shall deliver my people, defeat my enemies and defend my honor.

by Winston Pannell