

Text: Exod. 6:1-8

Title: "Resistance shows only God can deliver"

Time: 5/3/2020 am

Place: NBBC

Introduction: In the fall of 2015, Julia LuePhang was a cancer patient suffering from chronic myeloid leukemia that was resisting the chemotherapy treatments her doctors were prescribing. Because of the stubborn resistance of the cancer, Julia needed a stem cell transplant to have any chance of survival. She needed a donor who was a 100% genetic match.

The World Marrow Donor Association registry listed some 35 million donors at the time, and only two of these were the match Julia needed. One of those from England had to be disqualified because of his exposure to mad cow disease, which left just one person who could potentially save Julia's life. His name is Christian Menzel. He was a 34-year-old father of two from Germany. He donated the stem cells Julia needed, and he saved Julia's life as she eventually recovered from her disease.

Like a seemingly incurable cancer, Pharaoh has dug in his heels to resist God's work of deliverance in Egypt. He is determined to keep the Israelites oppressed and afflicted in the bondage of slavery. This resistance feels overwhelmingly hopeless to Moses at the beginning of Exodus 6. The situation calls for a Savior who is a perfect 100% match to deal with these circumstances of resisted deliverance. In our passage this morning, Moses learns from God that He alone is that perfect match for this task.

Verse one begins with the Lord explaining, "Now I will show you what I shall do." In the first eight verses of this

chapter, the Lord uses the words *I, My, and Myself* some 22 times. Just like Christian Menzel was the only one in the universe of donors who could help cure Julia's cancer, so when it comes to God's work of salvation, He is the only one in the universe who can save.

Prior to her cancer and its resistance to therapy, Julia, a Tennessean, had no idea how important Christian Menzel of Germany was to her future. She had no idea who Christian was or how dependent on him she would become for survival. When her eyes were opened to this truth, she willingly depended on him in her desperation and grew to feel a great bond of kinship with him.

Sin can blind us to how important the LORD of this passage is to our future. Many have no idea who the LORD is or how dependent on Him they are for survival and deliverance. My hope this morning is that this passage will show each of us who the LORD really is and why we must depend upon Him for our survival.

I. The LORD is the One who saves completely and eternally (6:1-2).

Illustration: Cancer patients like Julia must check back regularly for testing to see if the cancer has returned. We pray for loved ones who have to live that way.

Application: It is the wonderful nature of God's work of deliverance that once delivered, the saved individual never has to live that way. We do not have to live in fear that somehow the deliverance was only temporary and that we are going to find ourselves in the same place of bondage again. The LORD is the one who saves from bondage without the threat of ever having to return to its tyranny.

God promised that Pharaoh would send them and banish them, and he would do so with a strong hand. We will read later about how he tried to get them back, but he and his army are destroyed trying.

The victory of Christ frees the believer in the same way. Jesus saves us “to the uttermost, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for us” (Heb. 7:25). We can be “confident of this very thing, that He who began the good work [of salvation] in [us] will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:6). The old man who was the slave to sin is crucified with Christ, never to be revived again (Rom. 6:6).

Were our salvation dependent upon our faithfulness, we would be sure to wind up exactly where we started – in the bondage of Egypt. But this picture of redemption has nothing to do with the Israelites crafting a great escape plan and fighting their way to freedom. This picture of redemption is very simply the LORD acting upon His promise – “Now you shall see what I shall do.” Because it is that and only that, what God has done to redeem from bondage can never be undone. The same strong hand saves you and me completely and eternally from our sin and its consequences the moment we trust Christ for salvation.

John 10:27-30 is the Good Shepherd’s promise to each one of His sheep: “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one.” Do you have the assurance this morning that you are safe in these hands of the Shepherd who gave His life for the sheep? Do you hear His voice? Has He saved you completely and eternally?

II. The LORD is the One who saves faithfully and compassionately (6:3-6a).

Illustration: There are strict rules about anonymity between donors and recipient patients. No disclosure of identities can happen until after two years, and then only by mutual consent. In the case of Julia and Christian, they contacted one another by mail without putting their names on the communications they shared. Finally, when they were able, they had a great visit at which Julia for the first time had the opportunity to meet and thank the man who saved her life.

Application: God's rules are the opposite when it comes to His work of salvation. Anonymity about who this Savior is plays no roll at all. His work of salvation is faithful and compassionate. It is accomplished personally, and these verses tell us how God goes about personally saving people from bondage.

1. He reveals Himself to them (v. 3). This is a difficult verse for interpreters, because as translated here and by nearly every English translation, it seems to teach that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob did not know God's covenantal name, *Yahweh*, or at least they did not understand its significance in some important way. A myriad of passages in Genesis, however, make that idea difficult to justify (see for instance, Gen. 15:1-15). Clearly, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob knew both God's name, *Yahweh*, and its covenantal significance.

So what is the Lord saying in Exod. 6:3 if not that His name was unknown to the patriarchs? I think the best solution is to adjust the translation of the word *but* in the text. In Hebrew, the word for *but* is the same as the word for *and*, and the translation chosen really has to come from the context of the passage. Here is how I would translate verse 3: "And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob as God

Almighty and my name Jehovah. [Previously] I had not been known to them.”

As Moses comes to the LORD about the way in which the people he is trying to rescue know so little about Him, the LORD simply explains to Moses that what is needed here is a work of revelation. That is how Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob came to know the LORD as *God Almighty* and as His name *Jehovah* or *Yahweh*.

*God Almighty* refers to God’s greatness. *Yahweh* refers especially to God’s personhood and goodness. There was a time when even the patriarch knew nothing of this God, but because God graciously revealed Himself to them, they came to know Him after all. God tells Moses this because that is exactly what this new generation needed as well. They needed the revelation of God’s greatness and goodness as God Almighty and the person Yahweh.

Everyone starts out not knowing God and needing God to reveal Himself to them. You started that way, and so did I. Our generation today is in desperate need of that revelation as well, and it is right here in this wonderful book, the Bible. God has called us to tell people of the greatness of God Almighty and love of Yahweh from this book, His self-revelation. So God is the one who saves faithfully and compassionately, and that begins with providing His self-revelation of who He is and what He has done to save us.

2. He keeps His promise to them (vv. 4-6a). It is a promise made to all generations of the faithful, and a promise remembered and kept for them all. This Promise Keeper acts because He is faithful and compassionate. He has heard the groaning of His people and He remembers His covenant. We live in a day in which shattered covenants are the norm. Our God is not like that—He keeps His promises.

Why would He keep a promise like this one? Looking back on this wonderfully fulfilled promise of the deliverance of the nation from bondage, God would remind His people why He did so in Deut. 7:7-8:

“The LORD did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the Lord loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.” The LORD is the one who saves faithfully and compassionately. He loves you. He sent His Son to deliver you from the bondage of your sins. He will save you the moment you trust Him. He promises.

III. The LORD is the One who saves powerfully and purposefully (6:6b-8).

Illustration: I found a presentation produced by the Mayo Clinic called, “The Amazing Stem Cell.” The amazing power of the stem cell, of course, is its ability to be guided to become many kinds of cells. In addition to the blood and bone marrow transplant applications we have mentioned, the article noted: “Stem cells have the potential to rebuild healthy tissues, potentially helping people with heart disease, ALS, diabetes, Alzheimer’s disease, cancer, Parkinson’s disease, liver disease and more.”

Application: God is the designer of stem cells. That was easy for Him. Even more gloriously, God’s power to save His people from bondage is the power of an outstretched arm and great judgments (v. 6b). It is a work that is both

powerful and purposeful, and God lists three purposes He focuses on especially as He executes His work of salvation.

1. He powerfully purposes our freedom from bondage (v. 6b). What Egypt was to Israel, our sin is to our lives, our homes, our churches, and our nation. It is God's purpose in saving us to free us from bondage to the power of sin to rule over us. As believers, we always have the resources we need to not choose to sin. We can choose to walk in the Spirit and in no way fulfill the lusts of the flesh (Gal. 5:16). When a believer sins, he does so in spite of this freedom through the power of the Holy Spirit.

2. He powerfully purposes our unity as His people (v. 7). God takes Israel out of Egypt and brings them first to Sinai, where they become His nation governed by His laws. They are not merely His individuals, but His people. They are not peoples, but a people. His work of salvation has the same purpose today. He saves to build His church (Matt. 16:18). Believers are to be baptized and added to a local church for public ministry in His name and completion together of the Great Commission (Acts 2:41).

3. He powerfully purposes our future blessing (v. 8). God has plans to give Israel the possession of a land.

Illustration: Julia saw a purpose in her healing from cancer. She believed that she needed to write a book about her experiences titled, *Life's Journey Home*, that she hoped would be a help to others.

Application: Home for us is to be absent from the body and present with the Lord. We are pilgrims on our way to a city, whose builder and maker is God (Heb. 11:10). Our heart is not troubled, for we believe that Jesus went to pre-

pare a place for us and will come again and receive us to Himself, that where He is there we may be also (John 14:21-6). This ultimate purpose will reverse forever sin's ruin of the Garden of Eden, and man will walk again in the cool of the day with his Creator and Redeemer as the friend of God.

Conclusion: Only God can do the saving from sin that you and I need. He is the Lord. He is the one who saves completely, eternally, faithfully, compassionately, powerfully, and purposefully. Will we resist Him longer? Having found that One in 35 million chance to be truly saved from our sin, will we turn away and say "No thanks; not for me"?

The text mentions the outstretched arm and great judgments God used to save His people. Remember that it was the Passover lamb who bore the brunt of that, even for Pharaoh if he had only believed. Will you believe?

"A man came—I think it was actually in Philadelphia—on one occasion to the great George Whitefield and asked if he might print his sermons. Whitefield gave this reply; he said, 'Well, I have no inherent objection, if you like, but you will never be able to put on the printed page the lightning and the thunder.' That is the distinction—the sermon, and the 'lightning and the thunder.' To Whitefield this was of very great importance, and it should be of very great importance to all preachers, as I hope to show. You can put the sermon into print, but not the lightning and the thunder. That comes into the act of preaching and cannot be conveyed by cold print. Indeed it almost baffles the descriptive powers of the best reporters."

—David Martin Lloyd-Jones,

*Preachers and Preaching*