



# God's Battle

August 2020 – 33

## INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH Reform Movement

YOUTH DEPARTMENT OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

My dear youth:

I greet you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and ask that His blessings, love, and guidance be upon you in abundance.

Has a general ever been seen to fight the enemy alone, without needing his men to intervene and win the battle? It's unfeasible... But it has happened, and it still happens, although it seems incredible, we will see it.

### **The Yoke of Slavery**

The book of Exodus tells the story of the people of Israel's departure from Egypt. Every Israelite was a slave in the country of the pharaohs for more than four hundred years. Their life was miserable. They didn't have rights, they weren't respected, and their yoke of slavery made their lives bitter. Their slavery didn't happen overnight; when they first arrived in Egypt they were free, blessed, and protected by the Pharaoh and thanks to Joseph that was chosen

by God to bless Egypt especially to prepare the way for his family that would later become a numerous and peculiar people.

After some time Joseph died and a Pharaoh comes to the throne that didn't recognize the work that Joseph had done in favor of Egypt, nor does he recognize his God or his people, "Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph." Exodus 1:8. Abraham's descendants ended up as slaves in a strange land, under the authority of a Pharaoh that refused to grant rights and privileges to them. Their cruel reality is described with the following words, "So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor." Exodus 1:13. The apostle Paul tells us that the experience of the Israelites is good for our teaching or example (1 Corinthians 10:6,11). What practical applications do we find in this story?

### **Created to be Free**

Adam and Eve were created to be free, completely happy, blessed, and loved by God. But they decided to sin, thus placing themselves under the yoke of the devil that became their new Pharaoh. The old serpent or Satan promised them that if they disobeyed God, nothing bad would happen but that they would be like their Creator; in other words, they would enter into a new dimension of life that would make them happier and more powerful, but it was nothing further from reality, "While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage." 2 Peter 2:19.

The new Pharaoh of the human race converted this world into his kingdom of darkness. Sin enslaves us, it robs us from our freedom and leads us to death (Romans 6:23). The world lives in open transgression of the Law of God and the terrible results are obvious. In general, it is believed that complete happiness is the result of living as each one pleases, without considering the divine will because there is nothing to restrict freedom. But this is Satan's great deception. Let us remember that the devil is known in the Bible as the "father of lies." John 8:44.

Our first parents not only lost their freedom but their direct communion with God, their holiness, their Edenic home, their innocence, their unconditional love, and transmitted their sinful nature to all their descendants. Their actions affected all human beings, which is why Paul says, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23.

### **The Great Liberation**

In their new condition as slaves the Israelite cried out unto God and He freed them with a powerful hand, breaking down the power of the Pharaoh. The rite that the Lord uses to free His people from the tenth plague and lead them out of Egypt is the death of a lamb and the use of its blood to paint it on the doorposts of Hebrew homes (Exodus 12:22). The lamb and its blood are a symbol of the atoning death of Christ and therefore the presentation of the doctrine of justification by faith. Any Hebrew slave that accepts to fulfill the rite

that God established was declaring with it their faith in the atoning blood of Christ that one day would be shed for all men on Calvary.

The sacrificial system that God established in the Old Testament, was a preparation for the coming of the true Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world. It wasn't a new matter for the Hebrews from the time of the first parents down through the patriarchal era, the sacrifice of the lamb had been present as a means to attain to God's forgiveness. Any person that accepts Christ as their personal Savior is justified, forgiven, and freed through His blood because Christ is the truth and only the truth makes us free (John 8:32). "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." 1 John 1:7.

At this point, we have already answered the question of the introduction. The general that fights for his army without them fighting is God. You and I, as well as every human being that comes to this world can, in Christ, overcome the enemy, that is the devil, trusting in the merits of the Savior. The Lord Jesus died on the cross so that we have life and are freed from the condemnation of the law. Jesus trampled the serpent's head by dying without sinning. Thus, His victory by the spiritual transaction of imputed justification is ours without facing the battle, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." Ephesians 2:8-9.

When the Hebrew host leaves Egypt, they come to the shores of the Red Sea and the Pharaoh and his army follow them. The Pharaoh didn't want to lose his slaves. The devil didn't want to lose any of those he has enslaved, "The great controversy between Christ and Satan, that has been carried forward for nearly six thousand years, is soon to close; and the wicked one redoubles his efforts to defeat the work of Christ in man's behalf and to fasten souls in his snares." The Great Controversy, p. 518.

The Israelites come to the conclusion that they were freed from Egypt only to dig their own tomb in the wilderness. On one side is the Red Sea and on the other side is a mountain range, both impossible to cross. Behind them the Pharaoh and his army, also impossible to confront. There was no escape. These impossible situations cause the Israelites to despair and reproach Moses, "Then they said to Moses, 'Because there were no graves in Egypt, have you taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you so dealt with us, to bring us up out of Egypt?'" Exodus 14:11.

In life there are complicated situations from which we can't come out. Even after we are baptized there will be moments when our faith will be tried. Many people despair in these times of difficulty and complain of God and their fate, they even prefer to never have known Christ and continue in their previous slavery just like the Israelites. They could've prayed and trusted in the General that up to then had guided them with success. But they preferred to surrender to discouragement and desperation, "For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness." Exodus 14:12. Was it better to be slaves in Egypt and live under the harsh slavery of the Pharaoh? No, definitely not.

## Imparted Righteousness

The devil doesn't want us to be freed from sin. He will try to make us believe that leaving him and his pharaonic kingdom is a bad decision. This is why many return to Egypt. I've met people that leave Christ, the church, the extraordinary faith that God gifts us, and they go out to practice the sins that once dominated them.

The agonizing moments in which our faith is going to be tested will come, and that are we to do? The promise given is that our loving General will fight for us. Our example or guarantee is found in the history of Israel. Without any way of escape from a sure death, the Lord intervened and opened the Red Sea and thus the hosts of Israel were able to cross on dry land. The Bible expresses it, "And Moses said to the people, 'Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. The Lord will fight for you...' " Exodus 14:13-14.

Here we clearly see the work of Christ's grace, after being freed from the yoke of sin, when we have the same experience as the Israelites the Lord guarantees that He will fight for us. This is justification by faith in its imparted righteousness phase. It's the power of God working in us so that we don't collapse, give up nor discourage us but to enable us to overcome sin. We don't necessarily have to return to Egypt, we can overcome our inherited and acquired tendencies in Christ. "The righteousness by which we are justified is imputed; the righteousness by which we are sanctified is imparted. The first is our title to heaven, the second is our fitness for heaven." Review and Herald, June 4, 1895.

Paul teaches, "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." 1 Corinthians 10:13.

## The Conclusion

Dear friend, this doesn't mean that you are to be **passive** in the plan of redemption. It is our duty to accept the promises of God, to apply our faith and believe that God in Christ will give us the victory over sin and we are to stay still, that is, trust that it will be so knowing that God fought the battle against the enemy and has been victorious. There is no problem too big that God can't solve in His omnipotence. Do you believe it? The place that served as a way at the Red Sea to lead the Israelites out of the reach of the Pharaoh became a tomb for the Egyptians, thus our triumphant General will overcome every battle you are in, if you let him work for you.

Through the imputed righteousness of Christ, we can be freed from the condemnation of the law, the Lord forgives our sins and rescues us from the hands of the Pharaoh. Through the imparted righteousness of the Lord we are enabled to overcome the attraction of sin that the spiritual Egypt had over us,

the power of every temptation, of every situation where our soul is placed and tried.

“Every temptation, every opposing influence, whether open or secret, may be successfully resisted, “not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” Zechariah 4:6. *The Desire of Ages*, p. 529. Take courage and enlist under the standard of He who hasn’t lost a battle for His children. May the Lord bless you richly. Amen.

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For meditation:

1. What does it mean that God will fight our battles for us?
2. What part should we play in that battle?

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