CERTAINTY IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

 **DATE: 9/24/2017; 10/8/2017 pm**

**TEXT: Exodus 6:1-5**

**INTRODUCTION**

We’ve all had those days where things didn't work out the way we planned?

Such was the case for Moses as we closed out **chapter 5**

He has gone to Pharaoh and asked him to let his people go to Worship

He has done what God has told him to do

Circumstances, however, did not go as Moses planned

-- Pharaoh became more oppressive and ruthless

-- He increased the burden upon the people

-- The Jews become angry with Moses and blamed him for their problems

They are discouraged, doubting, and feel deceived by Moses

Moses responds by asking the Lord some pointed questions – **5:22, 23**

-- What are you doing?

-- Why have you treated us this way?

-- Why have you sent me?

Moses told the Lord – *“Since I have done what you told me to do, events have gotten worse and you have not done what I expected. The people are not delivered!”*

Beloved, the Christian life is not a Playground, but a Battleground

It is not a merry-go-round where we can goof-around

When we understand that the Christian life involves spiritual warfare,

We will begin to understand the trials, battles, defeats, wounds, pain, failures, ups and downs

We really are in a war!

Understand that some Christians may fall into sin as they have been struck by Satan’s darts

Satan is out to destroy us, and he is good at doing that, but we are to try to restore them

**Galatians 6:1 *– “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted”***

Let me just share with you a couple of thoughts by way of introduction

**1.** Moses needed to keep his focus upon the Lord's promises

… If we are to survive the battles we are facing …

… and the ones that will come in the future

We need to do the same

This is where our peace and strength come from

When our battles are raging and our problems are like a tsunami

Saints keep their sanity and serenity …

By keeping their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and trusting Him to work out their difficulties in His own time and way

(during our health problems, conflicts, financial woes, set-backs, and disappointments)

**Isaiah 26:3 - “*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee”***

**Philippians 4:7 - “*And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”***

2. Afflictions and tough times are designed for our good, not our detriment

**Job 23:10 - “*But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold”***

**II Corinthians 4:17 - “*For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us afar more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;”***

Difficult circumstances will do one of two things …

Develop or Destroy us

A dependence upon the Lord develops patience

Patience develops wisdom

**I Peter 1:5-8 …**

This is God’s plan for the life of Moses

He has hit rock bottom

He has returned to Egypt and has been rejected again by Pharaoh and his own people

This is exactly what he dreaded

He is at the end of his rope and with nowhere to go

Totally dependent upon the Lord like never before

Let’s stand to read **vs. 1-5** and …

We will now see how the Lord gives him …

**“Certainty in Uncertain Times”**

**~~~Prayer~~~**

**I. THE “ASSURANCE” – v. 1**

***“Then the LORD said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand …***

***… shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land”***

After Moses faced a very difficult situation

God comes to him with reassurance

There are three key words found here - ***then, now, I***

***“Then”*** = God has Moses where He wants him

The time is right

When God is ready, He moves

***“Now”*** = There’s great encouragement found in this word

There are no longer any more delay / waiting

God had everything worked out

He has also been patient with a fearful Moses

The curtain was being raised on the stage of Divine revenge, and the intervention of God was to begin

The long wait was over

***“Now”*** Moses would see things begin to happen

Because it would be God who would make things happen

**Psalm 103:8 - “*The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy”***

**Psalm 103:14 - “*For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust”***

**“I”** = God says – ***“I will do”***

There are no *if's*, *and’s* or *but’s*

God's message is one of absolute Certainty

What a blessing!

We have absolute security as Christians, because of the Certainties God has given us

We don't have to *think so* or *hope so* when it comes to our salvation and God's promises

*We can know so!* We have Certainty in Uncertain Times

The Bible informs us that there are a number of Certain things

**A. The Essentials of Assurance**

We have to just settle some things in our hearts

**Luke 21:14 – *“Settle it therefore in your hearts”***

**I Peter 5:10 – *“But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you”***

**1.** God’s ‘Word’ is Certain

**I Kings 8:56 – “*Blessed be the LORD, that hath given rest unto His people Israel, according to all that He promised: there hath not failed one Word of all His good promise, which He promised by the hand of Moses His servant”***

**Isaiah 55:11 – “*So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it”***

**2.** God’s ‘Rewards’ are Coming

**Matthew 10:42 – “*And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward”***

**3.** God's ‘Acceptance’ is Assured

**John 6:37 - “*All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out”***

Our Salvation is Certain in Christ

**4.** God’s ‘Love’ is Sure

**Romans 8:38, 39 - “…*For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,” “Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord”***

**5.** ‘Im-mor-tality’ is for Sure

**II Corinthians 5:1 - “*For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens”***

**6.** The ‘Exposure’ of Sin is for Certain

**Numbers 32:23 – “*But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out”***

**7.** ‘Death’ is Certain

**Hebrews 9:27 – *“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:”***

**8. ‘**Leaving’ earthly possessions is Definite

**I Timothy 6:7 - “*For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out”***

**9. ‘**Judgment’ is for Sure

**Ecclesiastes 12:14 – *“For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil”***

**10.** ‘Salvation’ is for Sure

**I John 5:13 – *“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God”***

Pharaoh may have told him - *No, they cannot go!*

But God said - *Oh yes they will!*

*Just watch what I’m going to do*

*I will deliver them with my strong hand*

Pharaoh may have seemed strong

To Moses, the circumstances seemed almost hopeless

This is when the Lord loves to make His move

God's power is revealed many times when the enemy seems to have his greatest advantage, when we are weaker than ever before, and when our problems seem overwhelming

God's power is frequently manifested when from our natural view-point; we appear least likely to overcome the enemy

**B. Sometimes God Waits**

God often waits until things are at their worst before He steps in to intervene on our behalf

This gives the Lord the opportunity to show how great His power really is

The greater we behold His power, the greater our faith can be encouraged and the greater is His glory!

The Lord is never late / He is always right on time

He tells Moses, ***“Now shalt thou see”***

It's time to *show* you, my people, and Pharaoh what I can do

I love this!

The power of God is awesome!

It can cause the enemy to do the very thing the enemy adamantly opposes

It would cause Pharaoh to insist on action he had strongly rejected

The power of God caused Haman to give honor to Mordecai though he utterly despised Mordecai and sought his destruction

God's power can cause our most adverse circumstances, which threaten our destruction …

To become circumstances that promotes our wellbeing

Moses was a living example of this truth as he was reared in the palace of the man that tried to kill him as a baby

God's power can make the wrath of man to praise Him

**Psalm 76:10 – “*Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain”***

**C. The Impossible Situation**

You may be facing (what seems like) an impossible situation right now

It may be the loss of a job, health problems, a wayward child, or a marriage on the verge of ending

All I can say is - *Turn your problem over to the Lord and watch Him work*

I have seen Him work many, many, many times

Never underestimate His power and don't put Him on a stop watch

Let Him do what He wants to do, in His own time

When you truly turn your situation over to Him, you can rest

Your peace will come from His care for you

This is what Peter tried to get across (When he said)

**I Peter 5:7 – “*Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you”***

**D. The Growth of Faith**

Strong faith in God does not come all at once

It is often gained through willing submission to His love and goodness in the midst of trials (over time)

**Romans 1:17 *– “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: …***

***… as it is written, The just shall live by faith”***

May this be our desire, as well?

**THE “ASSURANCE”**

**II. THE “ACCOMPLISHMENT” – v. 2-5**

An **Accomplishment** is *a remarkable or successful achievement*

God reminds Moses here, of His (Not that He needed to)

The reason we need reminding, is because we are so soon to forget

Over 50 times God uses the word ***“Forget”*** in the Bible

And a lot of the references are warnings against forgetting what God has said

**Deuteronomy 4:9** ***– “Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons;”***

**Deuteronomy 4:23** ***– “Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the LORD your God,”***

**Proverbs 3:1 *– “My son, forget not My law; but let thine heart keep My commandments:”***

We need to be like the psalmist …

**Ps. 119:16 *– “I will delight myself in Thy statutes: I will not forget Thy Word”***

If we are not careful, we will soon forget all that God has done for us

And like Moses, begin to Complain

First God reminds Moses of …

**A. Who He is - vs. 2, 3**

God continues in **v. 2** …

***“And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the LORD:”***

Once again, God identified Himself by His name ***“Jehovah”*** which literally means ***“I AM”***

Exactly how He identified Himself at the Burning Bush

Whenever you see the name ***“LORD”*** in the Old Testament, remember it’s speaking about ***“Jehovah”***

That Holy Name has the idea of the Eternal, Self-Existent One

Implied is His Great Power

He adds in **v. 3** that He …

***“… appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty,***

Which in Hebrew is *El-Shaddai*

***“but by My name JEHOVAH was I not known to them”***

What’s interesting is that the name ***“Jehovah”*** is used 96 times from **Genesis 12** through **50**

God clearly had identified Himself to Abraham as Jehovah / LORD

**Genesis 15:7 *– “And He said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it”***

As well as to Jacob in …

**Genesis 28:13 *– “And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;”***

So what is God saying here?

What God may have had in mind was that during the time of the patriarchs, He had not emphasized His name **Jehovah** as He was now going to do for Moses, Israel, and Pharaoh

***“God Almighty”*** is more of a descriptive title

While ***“Jehovah”*** is God’s personal proper name

Let me try to illustrate

It would be the difference between someone calling me Pastor Britt or Brother Jack

God is a very generic term, while Lord Jesus is personal

Next He reminds him of …

**B. What He’s Done – vs. 4, 5**

These are His actual Accomplishments

We find here God reviewing with Moses some of those things He has done on behalf of Israel

The past performance of God will greatly encourage someone's faith regarding God's future performance

It will serve as encouragement for those times when the circumstances threaten to overwhelm us

There are 3 ***“I have”*** ‘s here, representing God’s Accomplishments

**1.** God’s Covenant **– v. 4**

***“I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan”***

This was an encouraging reminder to Moses that Egypt is not the permanent dwelling place of Israel

But that the land of Canaan would be

Israel had been in Egypt over 400 years at the time of our text,

And this would cause someone difficulty perceiving Israel was going to do anything but stay in Egypt forever

-- Then with Pharaoh's opposition to Israel's leaving Egypt being so strong,

-- And with the ill feelings of the Israelites towards Moses being so bad,

Leaving Egypt and going to Canaan looked like nothing more than a pipe dream that could never possibly come to pass

But God reminds Moses that the land of Canaan is something more than that

It is, in fact, part of a Covenant He has established with Israel

In the Covenant God promised Israel a particular land of their own; and that land was not in Egypt

We need to go back to the Word of God again and again to review the promises of God to find encouragement

We need those promises in difficult circumstances, and we need to remember that they were ***“established”*** by God

**2.** God’s Compassion **– v. 5 a**

***“I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage”***

God told Moses at the burning bush that He would have compassion on Israel

There God said – **3:7 – *“I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows”***

Now God reminds him again that He cares

We have a need to be reminded frequently that God cares, for we are so prone to accuse God of not caring

Though God cares for us far greater and more faithfully than anyone else,

We still are likely to accuse Him more quickly of not caring than we accuse anyone else

Hence, the continued reminders of God's care are necessary

If we are faithful in reading the Bible, we will be reminded frequently of God's care, and that His compassion is great

Our every care is noted by God

To emphasize this compassion and care, Christ told men in **Luke 12:7** that – ***“even the very hairs of your head are all numbered”***

The Psalmist, in noting the care of God, spoke of God keeping track of our tears

**Psalm 56:8 – *“Thou tellest my wanderings; put thou my tears into thy bottle; are they not in [recorded in] thy book?”***

God's compassion for us is such a great encouragement especially in difficult times

But it is also a great rebuke

Too often we complain of God's lack of care when the problem is never God's failure in the first place

We are the ones who lack compassion for the things of God

It is a good thing God does not care for us like we care for Him!

**Lamentations 3:22 *– “It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not”***

God’s Compassion is Accomplished in our life

**3.** God’s Commitment **– v. 5 b**

***“I have remembered My covenant”***

The third ***“I have”*** underscores God's faithful, everlasting Commitment to Israel

He has not forgotten the Covenant

Therefore, it will be fulfilled

God is Committed to fulfilling His part to the last jot and tittle of the covenant

Moses and Israel may think God has forgotten after four hundred years of Egyptian bondage,

But God has not forgotten!

God never forgets; it’s you and I who do

One of the indictments upon Israel years later was that they kept forgetting God

**Psalm 106:13, 21 – *“They soon forgat His works” “They forgat God, their Saviour”***

Forgetting here is not a mental problem but a spiritual one

It plagues many people even today

The faithfulness of God is the one thing that we can count on for encouragement in any circumstance

We are often discouraged by the unfaithfulness of man in time of need

But God will never let us down

We can count on Him

If He has promised, He will fulfill

When He makes a Commitment, it will never be forsaken

Let this encourage us to strive to be faithful in our Commitment to serving God

**CONCLUSION**

**GOD’S “ASSURANCE”**

**GOD’S “ACCOMPLISHMENT”**