

Truth For the Final Generation

Midday Message

“The Lord Will Fight For you!”

Opening Hymn: 225 NH “God is Working His Purpose Out”

Scripture Reading: Exodus 14: 13, 14

Introduction:

Last time we saw that God is a God of peace and not war. We observed how God does not change in anyway from the principle of Agape or Caritas, A selfless, self-giving all for the other, expecting nothing in return Love! For this reason, the question can be asked “can God then be the author of suffering, sickness or death?” the answer is an emphatic No!

Crossing the Red Sea

When God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage, how were they to be delivered? What did God tell them?

¹³ And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.

¹⁴ The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace. Exodus 14:14

God was to deliver them. God was to fight for them. God was bringing them to the point of faith in the promises of God and God did all He could do apart from choosing for them to bring them to His idea or will.

What happened?

Israel chose the way of the “sword” and although God was to fight their battles, Although God had signally delivered them, although God had done it all, they still rejected Him and chose to follow their own stubborn course.

The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. ² The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. ³ They are all gone aside, they are all together

become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Psalms 14:1-3 (see Romans 3:10)

Slippery Slope of Apostasy

Since leaving Egypt, God's people did not understand their need of saviour although they acknowledged God. The deep-seated corruptions of the natural heart they did not know and thus they fell an easy prey to the debasing influences of idolatry in Egypt and its pull when they left. Through all of this God was seeking to bring them to His perfect will or desire for them.

Israel's Desire for A King

⁴ Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, ⁵ And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations. ⁶ But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. ⁷ And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. ⁸ According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. ⁹ Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them... ¹⁹ Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; ²⁰ That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles. 1 Samuel 8:4-9, 19, 20.

Although it was not the will of God that Israel have a king, God still worked along with their choice to bring them back to His perfect way if by some way they would see the goodness of God and be led to repentance (Romans 2:4).

Choosing The Way of War

It troubles many persons to think that God ordered the killing of individuals and nations in the Old Testament. They are perplexed and bothered by the seeming contradiction between the character of God and His express command to kill His opponents. God was simply giving the best advice in their wrong circumstance all the while seeking to bring them back to His perfect way. God permitted them or respected their choices while trying His best (to "protest solemnly unto them") to win them back to His way.

The Twelve Spies (See Patriarch and Prophets chapter 34)

God had promised His people a quick conquest of the land of Caanan. Following His divine directions, they were to be successful.

²⁰ Then I said to you, "You have reached the hill country of the Amorites, which the Lord our God is giving us. ²¹ See, the Lord your God has given you the land. Go up and take possession of it as the Lord, the God of your ancestors, told you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. ²² Then all of you came to me and said, "Let us send men ahead to spy out the land for us and bring back a report about the route we are to take and the towns we will come to. Deuteronomy 1:20-22

¹⁷ And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain: ¹⁸ And see the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many; ¹⁹ And what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong holds; ²⁰ And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time was the time of the firstripe grapes. Numbers 13:17-20

The Report of the Spies

²⁶ And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land. ²⁷ And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. ²⁸ Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. ²⁹ The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan. ³⁰ And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it. Numbers 13:26-30

An Evil Report

³¹ But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. ³² And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. nmen...: Heb. men of statures ³³ And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight. Numbers 13:31-33

The Fruit of Unbelief

¹ And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. ² And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! ³ And wherefore hath the Lord brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt? ⁴ And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt. Numbers 14:1-4

The Faithful Spies

⁶ And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes: ⁷ And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. ⁸ If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. ⁹ Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not. Numbers 14:6-9

By Divine direction the Lord interposes and interrupts the design of the people to attack the faithful spies Caleb and Joshua. Moses then intercedes for the people and God graciously pardon's their sin!

Protection withdrawn

²⁶ And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, ²⁷ How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me. ²⁸ Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the Lord, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: ²⁹ Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were

numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, Numbers 14:26 – 28

Confession but No Heart Change

⁴⁰ And they rose up early in the morning, and gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we be here, and will go up unto the place which the Lord hath promised: for we have sinned. Numbers 14:40

Rebelling Against the Lord Again!

⁴¹ And Moses said, Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the Lord? but it shall not prosper. ⁴² Go not up, for the Lord is not among you; that ye be not smitten before your enemies. ⁴³ For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and ye shall fall by the sword: because ye are turned away from the Lord, therefore the Lord will not be with you. ⁴⁴ But they presumed to go up unto the hill top: nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and Moses, departed not out of the camp. ⁴⁵ Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah. Numbers 14: 41-45

Warfare is not God's Will!

God had made it their privilege and their duty to enter the land at the time of His appointment, but through their willful neglect that permission had been withdrawn. Satan had gained his object in preventing them from entering Canaan; and now he urged them on to do the very thing, in the face of the divine prohibition, which they had refused to do when God required it. Thus the great deceiver gained the victory by leading them to rebellion the second time. They had distrusted the power of God to work with their efforts in gaining possession of Canaan; yet now they presumed upon their own strength to accomplish the work independent of divine aid. "We have sinned against the Lord," they cried; "we will go up and fight, according to all that the Lord our God commanded us." Deuteronomy 1:41. So terribly blinded had they become by transgression. The Lord had never commanded them to "go up and fight." It was not His purpose that they should gain the land by warfare, but by strict obedience to His commands. PP 392.3

Appeal

God never intended for Israel to choose the way of the sword or warfare. Through their stubbornness and unbelief they missed the lesson God was trying to teach them through the deliverance from Egypt.

¹³ And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. ¹⁴ The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.

Closing Hymn: NH 506 "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"

Yours in Our Master's Service

Elder Ryan Griffith

01/11/2025