

Glorious In Holiness

Sermon delivered on May 17th, 2015

By: Pastor Greg Hocson

Text: *Exodus 15:1-11*

Introduction

We are about to read a portion of the first song ever recorded in the Word of God. It is a song of victory written by Moses after the LORD delivered them from the Egyptian army at the Red Sea. It is a song of exultation over the enemies of God.

Exodus 15:1 Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. 2: The LORD is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him. 3: The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name. 4: Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea. 5: The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone. 6: Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. 7: And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble. 8: And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea. 9: The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them. 10: Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters. 11: Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?

In the previous chapter, the Israelites were in terrible danger. They were being pursued by the the Pharaoh and his army and humanly speaking there is no way of escaping from this danger. They were trapped, in front of them was the red sea, on their left hand and on their right are the mountains, behind them were Pharaoh and his army. The enemy had proudly and confidently said ...

9: The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.

It would take a miracle to be able to escape this danger. Unless God come through for them Moses and the Jews are all history. But we all know the story. Israel was gloriously and powerfully delivered from certain, terrible and insurmountable danger.

I - The Challenge

11: **Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee**, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?

There is the challenge to the gods of the Egyptians and to all other gods and compare them with Jehovah. Egypt was known for their many gods. Seems like for every need, for every circumstance, for every situation, for every problem, they have a god or goddess that they could call upon.

When God sent Moses and Aaron to appear before Pharaoh and relay God's message to let the people go, how did the Pharaoh respond?

Exodus 5:1 And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness. 2: And Pharaoh said, **Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go.**

Perhaps Pharaoh was thinking, "another god?" Who is the Jehovah that I should obey Him?

To which, God responded ...

Exodus 7:3 And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt. 4: But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies, and my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. 5: And **the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD**, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them.

If Pharaoh does not know, he will know. Not only will Pharaoh know but the Egyptians shall know who the LORD is and that there is none like Him!

How is God going to accomplish that? .

Exodus 7:3 And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt.

The LORD will work one miracle after another, until Pharaoh and the Egyptians know that Jehovah is the LORD and there is none like Him. These "signs and wonders" are more commonly referred to as "**plagues**". As Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not let God's people go, the LORD sent one plague after another . Every plague was meant to show that there was only one true God and this one true God was far greater than all of the multiple gods and goddesses of the Egyptians. Every plague was meant to demonstrate that the LORD was superior to all the other gods of Egypt. Every plague was directed and a challenge to an Egyptian god or goddess.

Plague #1: Water Turned to Blood - a challenge and an attack against **Hapi** - Egyptian God of the Nile

Plague #2: Frogs coming from the Nile River - a challenge and an attack against **Heket** - Egyptian Goddess of Fertility, Water, Renewal

Plague #3: Lice from the dust of the earth - a challenge and an attack against **Geb** - Egyptian God of the Earth

Plague #4: Swarms of Flies - a challenge and an attack against **Khepri** - Egyptian God of creation, movement of the Sun, rebirth

Plague #5: Death of Cattle and Livestock - a challenge and an attack against **Hathor** - Egyptian Goddess of Love and Protection

Plague #6: Ashes turned to Boils and Sores - a challenge and an attack against **Isis** - Egyptian Goddess of Medicine and Peace

Plague #7: Hail rained down in the form of fire - a challenge and an attack against **Nut** - Egyptian Goddess of the Sky

Plague #8: Locusts sent from the sky - a challenge and an attack against **Seth** - Egyptian God of Storms and Disorder

Plague #9: Three Days of Complete Darkness - a challenge and an attack against **Ra** - The Sun God

Plague #10: Death of the Firstborn - a challenge and an attack against **Pharaoh** - The Ultimate Power of Egypt

Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, was worshipped by the Egyptians because he was considered to be the greatest Egyptian God of all. It was believed that he was actually the son of Ra himself, manifest in the flesh.

Who among these gods is like unto Thee? False gods can neither save nor destroy. But Jehovah can do both in glorious and powerful manner. The princes and potentates of the world are called gods, but they are feeble and mortal, none of them all comparable to Jehovah, the almighty and eternal God.

Numbers 33:4 For the Egyptians buried all their firstborn, which the LORD had smitten among them: **upon their gods also the LORD executed judgments.**

So, we see the Egyptian gods, or the objects of the Egyptians' idolatry, were confounded, and rendered completely powerless, by the ten plagues and now we read the Song of Moses, celebrating God's supremacy and glory.

II - The Affirmation

11: Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, **glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?**

I love rhetorical questions specially the ones recorded in the Bible and the Bible is full of them. **Rhetorical questions** are questions that the answer is obvious. They are questions, but they are powerful questions that declare something.

Genesis 18:14 **Is any thing too hard for the LORD?** At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.

Genesis 18:25 That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: **Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?**

John 8:46 **Which of you convinceth me of sin?** And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? **Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?**

The answer to these questions are obvious.

Here in our text, Moses asked the question ...

11: **Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee,** glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?

The answer to this question is obvious. Of course, no one. There is no one like Him. There is no one that could be compared to Him. Our God is matchless and incomparable. That is what the Word of God is saying when it says, God is holy.

1. It refers to God's uniqueness

The word "holy" means, primarily, "to be separate", "to be set apart", "to be different".

When the Bible says, God is holy, it is first of all saying that God is different from us. He is separated from us. He is not like us. He is unique, unapproachable and incomprehensible. He is supremely majestic above us. He is sovereign over us. God is absolutely different or distinct from all His creatures, and is exalted above them in infinite majesty. He is high and lifted up.

There are many verses that speak of God as high above all and as completely unique...

Psalm 113:4 The LORD is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens. 5: **Who is like unto the LORD our God,** who dwelleth on high,

Isaiah 40:25 **To whom then will ye liken me,** or shall I be equal? saith **the Holy One.**

Isaiah 46:5 **To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like?** 6: They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship. 7: They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove: yea,

one shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble. 8: Remember this, and shew yourselves men: bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. 9: Remember the former things of old: **for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me,**

Jeremiah 10:6 **Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O LORD; thou art great, and thy name is great in might.** 7: Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain: (indeed it is Thy due) forasmuch as among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, **there is none like unto thee.**

Revelation 15:4 Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? **for thou only art holy:** for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest. Added to the concept of holiness is the truth that absolute holiness belongs only to God.

2. It refers to God's sinlessness

When the Bible says, God is holy, it is referring to His moral purity. God is absolutely pure. He is free from all sin. He is free from pollution. He is not touched by any sin or pollution. God is untouched and unstained by the evil of the world.

He is completely without sin and apart from it.

1 John 1:5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

He is so pure He cannot look upon sin.

Habakkuk 1:13 Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?

Because He is holy, His attributes are holy; that is, whatever we think of as belonging to God must be thought of as holy.

The Attribute of Attributes

11: Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, **glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?**

God is not simply holy. He is glorious in holiness. As one preacher said, Holiness is the Attribute of attributes. It is the crowning attribute of God. It is God's central attribute. This is what makes God, God. Holiness is the most significant of all His attributes. Without understanding of the holiness of God the cross, the crucifixion and the eternal punishment in Hell will not make sense.

In the Bible times there were people who were given the privilege to see a vision of God. Isaiah chapter 6 is an account of Isaiah's vision of God. This is a vision not a dream. Isaiah actually saw the Lord and it was so overwhelming and so consuming he barely survived.

Isaiah 6:1 In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

Tragedy struck but then Isaiah saw the Lord sitting upon a throne.

Then he saw angelic beings flying back and forth the throne crying ...

2: Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. 3: And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

What are the significance of these words? .

I just learned that Biblical Hebrew had no punctuations. And if that is the case, how do they emphasize a word that is of crucial importance? How do they convey that, what they are about to say is of great importance? There many different ways. And one of the ways is term repetition or repetition of the same word. Our Lord used this when He spoke to Nicodemus...

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Just think about it. When God says something once, it is important. When He says it twice, it is very important. But when He says it three times, that means it is of supreme importance.

There is no other attribute found in the Word of God that has this kind of emphasis. You will never find in the Bible where it says, God is love, love, love, or mercy, mercy, mercy, or justice, justice, justice, or eternal, eternal, eternal, or faithful, faithful, faithful. Although these are all true, that God is love, merciful, just, eternal, and faithful, but you will never find these attribute in triplicate form. But it does say ...

Isaiah 6:3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

Holiness is the only attribute of God mentioned in triplicate.

Two times the Bible tells us that God is holy, holy, holy. The other place is found in ...

Revelation 4:8 And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, LORD God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

There is no other attributes that He delights more than this one. This is the attribute that God delights more than any other.

This is a reference to the absolute complete holiness of God. He is not simply holy, He is holy, holy, holy.

III - Our Response

So, what is it to us?

There are attributes of God that we like to read about, to hear about, to think about, to talk about and that we delight in above others. We tend to think more often of God's grace, of God's mercy, of God's love, of God's goodness, of God's faithfulness, than we do of justice. Some of God's perfections we simply delight more in, because of the benefits they bring to us. They help us, they comfort us, they bring us joy, they bring us encouragement in our times of trials and troubles and sadness. So we think a lot about those attributes.

But it is to our detriment if we ignore the attributes of God that pertains to His moral perfection, His justice, His wrath, His jealousy, His severity, and His holiness. We need to see the holiness of God.

The Result of Seeing the Holiness of God

1. Humility and Confession

5: Then said I, **Woe is me!** for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

Any time someone even sees a vision of the Lord they are so overwhelmed with the power of God and the majesty of God and the holiness of God that the posts shake, thunders and lightnings occur,

Then said I, **Woe is me!** for I am undone ...

This is an intense word of despising oneself. I am in trouble. I am cursed. I am doomed.

As soon as Isaiah had a vision of God, he knew that he was in trouble. He didn't need anybody tell him, that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. He didn't have to be told to acknowledge his sin and his sinfulness. No, as soon as he saw God, he knew and he confessed that he is in a dire.

Then said I, **Woe is me!** for I am undone ...

I am ruined. I am falling apart.

When Isaiah saw God, he saw himself. And because he saw himself, he cannot but see one thing, his own sinfulness.

2. Worship and Adoration

11: Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, **fearful in praises**, doing wonders?

Because He is glorious in holiness, He is fearful in praise. Holy worship and deepest reverence and fear is the spontaneous reaction to His glory.

Today in our churches, we desperately try to create an atmosphere which is conducive to worship. Millions of dollars are spent to create a worshipful atmosphere in our worship services. Dim colored lights, fog machine to fill the room with fog or smoke, expensive musical instruments and lightings, professional worship bands and worship teams, decors conducive to wor-

ship, organ music, stained glass windows, etc. Nothing wrong with some of these. But no matter how much we invest, no matter how we try, without a vision and appreciation of God's holiness, worship will not take place.

What is worship? .

Worship is a spontaneous response to the greatness of God and holiness of God. So, you see, if that is the definition of worship, then worship will not take place unless we see the greatness, glory and holiness of God.

But when we see a glimpse God's holiness, we do not need dim colored lights, smoke-filled room, stained glass windows, worship bands and worship teams to worship. A glimpse of God's glory and holiness, will make everyone of us true worshippers.

3. Holiness and Purity

The holiness of God demands that we be holy

1 Peter 1:15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;
16: Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

We are not called to be omnipotent as God is or to be omniscient as God is, but we are to be holy.

IV - A Call to the Unsaved

Psalm 113:4 **The LORD is high above all nations**, and his glory above the heavens. 5: **Who is like unto the LORD our God**, who dwelleth on high, 6: **Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth!**

This great and glorious and holy God who above all, who is incomparable, who is without sin, humbled Himself by coming to us, taking a human form, dwelt among us, made sin for us who knew no sin, to redeem sinners like you and me. How about it? Come to Jesus. Come as you are, confessing and believing and trusting. Why not now? Why not come to Jesus now? Come! Come! Come! Come to Jesus now! Come believing and trusting that who Christ is and what He has done on the cross of Calvary is sufficient to forgive and to cleanse and to save and to make you holy. Amen!