

“God With Us” is Not Just a Christmas Thing! The Book of Exodus

The realization that “God is with us” didn’t originate with the birth of Jesus! God has always been present with His people, no matter where/when!

Last week in the book of Genesis, we saw the mess that man made out of God’s good creation, as well as the mess it caused to their relationship!

Because of sin, God threw Adam & Eve out of the Garden & out of His presence. But God will not give up on His promise, & He will never give up on His people!
- Remember Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob & Joseph from last week!

In this 2nd book, the book of Exodus, we see God’s continued faithfulness in pursuing, delivering, leading, providing for, & dwelling with His people!

The book starts off with the death of Joseph. But God continued to bless His people, even in a faraway land, & under the rule of a pagan king! **Exo. 1:6-7**

This new king in Egypt made life miserable for God’s people – **Exo. 1:8-14**. He even decreed the death of all their male offspring – **Exo. 1:15-22**.

But again, God was with them, and God’s people flourished! It’s here that Moses is introduced into God’s story, & in a pretty miraculous way! **Exo. 2:1-10**

What I want to highlight in Moses’ life is that God decided to reveal Himself to, & dwell with, him in a very special way! The God who created the universe invites Moses into His presence & meets with him (Mt. Sinai/burning bush) - **Exo. 3**.

God’s very presence became an extension of His provisions for His people! And this was just the beginning of God’s renewed dwelling with His people!

The story advances, & God delivers His people from Egypt under Moses’ & then leads them into the wilderness! Moses was God’s chosen leader, but God Himself did the leading through the pillar of cloud & the pillar of fire.

God’s very presence was with them, leading them forward - **Exo. 13:21-22**

He led them to the Red Sea, & though God was with them, the people found themselves once again in a self-perceived “Where’s God?” situation!

Have we experienced this in our lives? We say we believe that our God is with us, & He has proven it time & again, but in our minds we sometimes doubt it.

The sending of Moses, the plagues, the deliverance, the pillar of cloud/fire...

All of this & yet somehow the Red Sea was too big of a challenge for God???

God shows them once again that He is with them, & God makes a way for them to cross the sea on dry land & He also destroys their enemies in the engulfing waters of the sea. God was, & is, continually with His people!

After God’s presence & power were on display at the Red Sea, God leads them to & meets with them at the mountain of God, just as He did w/Moses

Most of us know what happens next! The people make a mess of things again by worshipping an idol made from their own hands, even though they were encamped in the very presence of the One true God @ Mt. Sinai.

I grew up in a family that loves to go camping. For me the mountains are a holy place! My wife grew up in a family that loves to go to the beach! She says the beach is her holy place! We feel closer to God when we are there!

But God’s people were literally in His presence at the beach (the Red Sea) & on the mountain (Mt. Sinai). But even there, sin still got the better of them & they missed the implications of being in His presence. **Psalms 139:1-18**

God is a God who is with us always – even in the darkness! But too often the darkness blinds us from this reality, & we lose sight of it/Him!

Idolatry is often the form the darkness takes, even in the lives of God’s people!

In the Exodus, idolatry went beyond the golden calf. They tried to replace God & His continual presence with them, with other things:

- The comfort of the familiar – *They’d rather go back to Egypt than go hungry with God in the wilderness!* **Exo. 16:2-3**
- The hope of avoiding suffering - *They’d rather be slaves again, than be in the desert with a target on their back!* **Exo. 14:10-12**
- A faithless faith – *Hopelessness was their go-to reaction, rather than faith, whenever there was something big that stood in their way (the Red Sea)!*
- A god of their own choosing - *They chose to serve a god they could see & touch, over the One true God.* **Exo. 32:1-4**
- Fear – They thought that God at a distance meant safety! **Exo. 20:18-21**

God’s rightful place is with us, that’s why He created us! And He is willing to do whatever it takes to bring us into His presence, even if that means entering into ours – Egypt, wilderness, Red Sea, Mt. Sinai, the Law, the Ark, the Tabernacle.

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