

Exodus

Sermon #4: Introducing: King YHWH

Exodus 4-6

Dr. Matt Cassidy ---- September 8, 2024

Let me show you a picture of a tombstone. Actually, the first picture is—sorry—the United States Air Force Academy cemetery.



And what's interesting is that at the Air Force Academy, there is this tombstone. And this tombstone is different from the others. This one is no like any other tombstone at the United States Air Force Academy. And you might notice that it's for William Crawford. And he's retired from the Army. He was a retired master Sergeant in the United States Army, and yet, there he lies.



What's even more interesting is that he served as a janitor at the Air Force Academy. That's why—I guess ... I don't know. Let me tell you a story about Bill Crawford—William Crawford, retired from the Army. He was mostly forgettable at the Air Force Academy for about nine years or so. He was pushing his mop and cleaning urinals. And for nine years the Academy thought they knew someone. Sometimes when you think you know someone, you don't know them like you should.

And it all changed in the fall of 1976 when the junior class of cadets was assigned to go into the details of the Second World War when the Allied forces were invading Italy. It was an especially difficult time in World War II. And then one of the cadets, in his dorm, yells at his dorm mate and says, "Hey, you're not going to believe this. Let me read this story to you." And he starts reading about Private William Crawford and how he was serving his company as a scout that day and went ahead of the company and found himself surrounded by three machine gun nests of Germans. The Nazis had set up an ambush, and his company was going to march right into that.

Now Bill Crawford was all alone, and he was unable to communicate in any way back to the company. And all he had was a rifle and a few hand grenades. So, he took it upon himself, and he destroyed all three machine gun nests and saved his company.

As they were marching through, he noticed that one of his friends was down and wounded, and so he stayed back to help him. And by staying back, he was eventually captured by the German army and was presumed dead.

Within a year, his father was flown to Washington, D. C., so that his father could receive the greatest medal in the military. He was given the Medal of Honor for the heroism of Bill Crawford, his son.

Well, about a year after that, they found the POW camp where Bill was, and he was freed, and he came back to the United States and continued to work in the army until he retired. And then after he retired, he went to work as the janitor at the Air Force Academy. And so, now these young cadets find out who he is, and they run to him and say, “Are you this Bill Crawford?”

“Yep, that’s me.”

Things changed after that day. They used to walk by him and never give him a glance, and now they always said, “Good morning.” “Good evening, Mr. Crawford.” They didn’t leave the messes they used to leave for the janitor to clean up, because the janitor was a hero. It was found out that Bill Crawford never actually enjoyed the ceremony of receiving the Medal of Honor—the highest award you can receive in the military—because his father had. Well, the graduating cadet class of 1984 made sure that was going to be made right. So, they had rows of VIPs and former graduates of the Academy, and Ronald Reagan flew in on Air Force One and presented that Medal of Honor.

So now when you look at that headstone and you say, “This is a headstone that’s different than others,” you look at it and you say, “Well, sure, he was in the Army, and he’s buried in the Air Force cemetery.” But you also see that it’s not like the others in that it has that star on it. It’s the Medal of Honor. That’s the old janitor’s tombstone.

You know, when you think you know someone, sometimes you find out you barely know them at all. And there was a lot more to that janitor than his mop.

Introduction to Yahweh

Well, when we look at the Book of Exodus, we’re going to see that all of creation has the same lesson. Sometimes we say that we know God or that we know about God. And Exodus puts a pause to that and says, *Do you? Sometimes you think you know something, and you don’t.*

Because there's way more to God than God Almighty, El Shaddai. And if you look at the storyline of history, starting in Genesis, there are progressive details about who God is and what He's like. And in Genesis, we're introduced to God Almighty, the God of creation and power. At this point in the Book of Exodus, God believes that history, mankind, is ready to be formally introduced to who He really is.

We see this when God asks Moses to go and tell the Israelites that they are soon to be freed from Egypt, and Moses says, "If they ask me who sent me to them, what am I supposed to say? What's Your name? Do I just say it's God Almighty, El Shaddai?"

And then the Lord says, "I AM that I AM. Tell them that Yahweh sent you." That's His formal, proper name. Tell them I AM sent you.

And in your Bibles, if you see the word written L-O-R-D written in all capital letters, that doesn't mean "the lord" like a lord or a sovereign. It means Yahweh. L-O-R-D in all capital letters means Yahweh. It means His formal name, His proper name, and it's there for a purpose.

And the story in Exodus, and certainly what we're going to look at today in chapters four through six is this formal introduction. But the goal, it will say multiple times, is so that you and I and all of creation, visible and invisible, would know that He is Yahweh. And this "know" refers to experiential knowledge. It is an existential knowledge. It is a vivid knowledge. And in the Exodus itself, Yahweh is committed to making a memory out of this revelation. That's why all the special effects are part of this.

Yahweh Is King

There's way more to Yahweh than just God Almighty. That's the point. He's going to make that point clear. The big idea in chapters 4 through 6 is that Yahweh is King. It means He rules. He's a monarch.

There are a couple of fundamental principles in a monarchy. One: that the people do what they are told. They just do what they're told. There doesn't need to be an explanation because the king rules what he possesses. The second principle is that the king can do whatever he wants because he's king. And so, the rest of us are just to let the king be the king. And you're going to see that in this passage today.

When you have a king, you owe him three things. You owe him your service. You are called a servant. You owe him your worship. That means you're allegiant to him and him alone. You are faithful to him. And then, you owe him sacrifice. Everything belongs to the king, and so even the money that you make by plowing the field—that's his field. And so, you pay him back. You give him sacrifice.

And so, if you look at the story that's unfolding in Exodus, you're looking at who's king, and who they serve and who they worship and to whom they sacrifice. If you look at chapters 4 through 15, the bigger, whole story of them getting out of town—if you'll look at that, if you'll just humor me for this—you'll look at it as just a giant battle, good versus evil. But it's more like a fight. It's more like a cage fight. And they're betting everything. They're betting the house on this. We're going to read in just minute, they're betting on all the Hebrew slaves, they're going to bet on all the first born. And also, Pharaoh's going to do the same thing—all of Egypt's first born. This is a pretty big wager here. This is a fight between two kings. It's a cage fight between two kings. Who owns these people? Who is the king that they're supposed to serve and worship and give to? Is it going to be Yahweh, or will it be Pharaoh?

Exodus 4:21-23

The LORD said to Moses, “When you return to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders I have given you the power to do. But I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go. ²² Then say to Pharaoh, ‘This is what the LORD says: Israel is my firstborn son, ²³ and I told you, ‘Let my son go, so he may worship me.’ But you refused to let him go; so I will kill your firstborn son.’”

Here's how the story begins in chapter 4. God goes and tells Moses, *This is my fight strategy. Listen to me.* Chapter 4, verses 21 through 23: “And then Jehovah”—Yahweh and Jehovah are the same actual name—“Yahweh said to Moses, ‘When you return to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders I have given you the power to do. But I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go.’” Wait, what? Yeah. “ ‘Then say to Pharaoh, ‘This

is what Yahweh says: Israel is my firstborn son, and I told you, ‘Let my son go, so he may worship me.’ But you refused to let him go; so I will kill your firstborn son.”””

So it starts right here. This is not like a drag race for the title for the car; this is for the firstborn, the firstborn son of Israel. Those are the people of the covenant, the descendants, the chosen ones, the elect, the followers of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And that’s what God has on the table, and Pharaoh doesn’t know it, but he’s gone all in as well—his firstborn and all of Egypt. This will be the end of one of these monarchies. It is a God who is king versus a king who thinks he’s God. That’s what is happening.

God Will Harden the Heart of Pharaoh

And before we move on, I want to spend a little bit of time on the fact that God is going to harden Pharaoh’s heart. It’s going to show up multiple times. And some people have a great deal of difficulty with it for good reasons. How can God be both just and harden Pharaoh’s heart and then hold Pharaoh responsible for what God has done to his soul?

Here’s the thing. First, you need to know that it will say nine times that God will harden Pharaoh’s heart. But that comes after Pharaoh hardening his own heart nine times. So, Pharaoh starts it and God finishes it. And so, how can God be just and be the one who hardens Pharaoh’s heart?

Well, as we’ve said before, there are two storylines in this book, in the narratives in the Old Testament especially. And the lower storyline is what is happening in a way that we can understand it. And here’s how you can understand it. This is a battle. This is a fight for all of creation history. And it’s all to display the power and the nature of Yahweh. It’s all part of the formal introduction. And it needs to go ten rounds to be truly effective—ten plagues. Because that will show off the power of God.

Now Pharaoh wants to go all ten rounds. But he can’t. But he wants to. He can go five rounds. It says that he hardens heart six times going into those first five plagues. And he does marvelous. But now he’s going into the sixth round, and if you can see him on his bench, and his coaches and his trainer are next to him, and they’re telling him, *Look, there’s no way you can make it another round. You’re done. You’re concussed, you can barely see out of your swollen eyes. Let’s just call it. Let’s throw in the towel. You’ll never make it through the sixth.*

And then one of the trainers says this: *Look, there's something we can do. The only way you can make it another round is if we juice you with something that hardens your heart even more. And that additional stubbornness will get you through the sixth round. Then we're going to have to come back here again.*

Where'd you get that juice?

Actually, Yahweh gave it to us. He's going to help us get back in the ring for rounds seven, eight, nine, and ten.

The point is this. Pharaoh would say, *Give it to me! I'm going ten rounds! I'm going to take this guy Yahweh.*

The point is that God hardening Pharaoh's heart is not violating his will because Pharaoh wants his heart hardened. He just can't get it there, and so he's actually getting help from God. He's getting what he wants.

That's the lower story. There's an upper story that we're not expected to completely understand, in my view anyway. There's a higher explanation of what God is doing and why. And that is this. Know this about God, that He is what is called omniscient, and that means He is omni-science (that's how to spell it), and that means that He's all knowing. And when we say that God is all knowing, it's important for us to recognize that He knows everything that has happened, everything that is happening, will happen, and won't happen. When we say that God knows all things, we know that He knows everything that could possibly happen. It's hard to understand, except that now there are a bunch of movies out where they try to explain to us the multiverse. That's what we're referring to. There is almost an infinite number of possibilities of universes that He could have created. And He knows what every single one of those are.

And so, God in His sovereignty, knowing all things and having the power, looks at this character—we'll call him Biff for obvious reasons. In all three movies he's the same. And He looks at Biff, and He says, *You know, in every single possible universe, you are stubborn and defiant and evil, and you think you're above even God Almighty himself—every single universe that we could put you in.* And so, God in His sovereignty says, *You know what? I'll tell you what, Biff. I need you to play a part so that everyone among all created things can see who I am and what I'm like. I want you to be part of my formal introduction to all creation when I tell the created world I am God. I want you to play this part of a crazed, sociopathic, narcissistic king who is Pharaoh over Egypt. Would you do that? Now listen, before you say yes, you're going to*

have to go all ten plagues with me. It's the only way it can happen, and I'm going to have to help you in this last one. I'm going to have to help you harden your heart.

And what does Pharaoh say? Put me in. I mean, I could play a villainous scoundrel in China. That's no fun. I can rule over Egypt and live in Cairo my whole life? Yeah, put me in. I'll play that part. I'm going to do it anyway. I might as well make a splash.

That's the higher-level power and sovereignty of God playing itself out in a human's life while respecting his free will.

Application

Here's the thing—here's kind of a pause for application. Did you know that what He did with Pharaoh here He does with each and every one of us? He has placed you right here in this town, right now, for the same purpose of moving Pharaoh to Cairo back in those days, to glorify Him at the most opportune time with the greatest potential for you to show that Yahweh is King. That's what your job to do is in this lifetime. And there is no better place in all possible universes for you to do this. It's the best place, this is the most opportune time. This is your “For such a time as this ...” moment. Seize it. Do not waste your life. Surrender. Live a life completely surrendered to Yahweh because Yahweh is King. That's another way of looking at this problem that we have. How about this? Yahweh is King and He can do whatever He wants? We're just His possessions.

Moses' Near Death

Okay, back to the story. Moses is on His way (this is another one of these very strange stories) to go tell Pharaoh what God told him to do. And on his way there---I'll just read it to you—God finds Moses, and it says, “Yahweh met Moses and tried to kill him. God struck Moses with some illness and he's almost lifeless—he's dying.”

Exodus 4:25-26

But Zipporah took a flint knife, cut off her son's foreskin and touched Moses' feet with it. "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me," she said. 26 So the LORD let him alone. (At that time she said "bridegroom of blood," referring to circumcision.)

And then look what happens. Here's the cure in verses 25 and 26: "But Zipporah"--- that's his wife---"took a flint knife, cut off her son's foreskin and touched Moses' feet with it. 'Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me,' she said. So Yahweh let him alone"—let him live. "(At that time she said "bridegroom of blood," referring to circumcision.)"

Moses is on his way to do what Yahweh told him to do, and Yahweh puts him in this coma. What? How do we make sense of that? There are a lot of different answers to this. There are two that I am drawn to. One is this: that Moses, the son of Abraham, part of the covenant community, the people of God, does not parent like that. He doesn't parent his sons with that family gift. He chooses not to bring up that covenant sign, which for the covenant people is circumcision. And Moses is supposed to lead the covenant people out of freedom, and yet his own sons aren't practicing the ritual of circumcision. In other words, you know, sacraments are sacred. And Moses needs to bring this to his own house. His parenting style disqualifies him to lead. And God is going to do something about that. Okay, wow, sacraments are sacred—note to self.

And the second thing that's obvious here is that Moses is expendable. God can send a parrot to fly in and sit on the shoulder of Pharaoh if He wants to. It's interesting that Moses is expendable. And the reason is that because Yahweh alone is our redeemer. We see this in the rest of the story.

There's another reason this kind of makes sense. Yahweh is King, and the King can do whatever He wants with those things that He possesses.

The Faceoff

Exodus 5:1

Afterward Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, “This is what Jehovah, the God of Israel says: “Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the desert.”

All right, all that is set up. Now Moses is finally in the presence of Pharaoh with his older brother Aaron, and here’s what happens. “Afterward Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, ‘This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel says: “Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the desert.”’” *These are my people, Yahweh says. They’re to serve me and worship me and they’re to give sacrifices to me.*

Exodus 5:2

Pharaoh said, “Who is the LORD, that I should obey Him and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD and I will not let Israel go.”

And Pharaoh says this. Let me tell you, this is one of the top ten verses in human history, but it never makes it to one of those memory cards. This changes human history. “And Pharaoh said, ‘Who is Yahweh, that I should obey Him and let Israel go? I do not know Yahweh and I will not let Israel go.’”

Pharaoh says, *Are you kidding me? I never heard of this Yahweh, and not to mention I’ve got 600,000 men as slaves and they belong to me. And so, no, I’m not going to do what Yahweh tells me to do.*

Exodus 5:3

They they said, “The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Now let us take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God ...”

And so, it’s on. Verse 3: “Then they said, ‘The God of the Hebrews has met with us.’” Please, I’m warning you a second time. “ ‘Now let us take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to Yahweh our God.’”

Exodus 5:4-5

**But the king of Egypt said, “Moses and Aaron, why are you taking the people away from their labor? Get back to your work!”
5 Then Pharaoh said, “Look, the people of the land are now numerous and you are stopping them from working.”**

Verse 4: “And then the king of Egypt said, ‘Moses and Aaron, why are you taking the people away from their labor? Get back to work!’” *They’re my servants, not God’s servants.* “And then Pharaoh said, ‘Look, the people of the land are now numerous and you are stopping them from working.’” They’re supposed to be doing what I tell them to do, and you’re putting a pause on that.

Bricks without Straw

And Pharaoh is a shrewd politician. He does something that is rather ingenious. Following this conversation, this faceoff with Moses and Aaron, he says, *Okay, here’s what we’ll do. We’re going to change the rules. Everyone has to hit the same quota for their brickmaking (that’s what they did—they made bricks), but now I’m going to say that you have to get your own straw. I’m going to turn the people of Israel against Moses, the person that’s supposed to lead them out. Same quota, twice the work.* That’s the point. Same quota, twice the work. He’s going to beat this Yahweh out of Israel. Do you see what he’s doing? He’s going to beat Yahweh out of Israel.

Application

And even this is somewhat of a timeless experience for many of us, right? We make a choice: *I'm going to serve Yahweh. I will worship Yahweh alone. I've got a new commitment to sacrificing and giving to Yahweh.* And then you're waiting for blessing and peace to come, and you end up getting persecuted or oppressed. Can anybody else relate to that? That happens. It goes all the way back to Egypt.

Exodus 5:15-16

Then the Israelite foremen went and appealed to Pharaoh: "Why have you treated your servants this way? ¹⁶ Your servants are given no straw, yet we are told, 'Make bricks!' Your servants are being beaten, but the fault is with your own people."

In the story, they go two days, and nobody is meeting their quota because they've got twice the labor. So, they go and protest to the Pharaoh and say, *Hey, we can't keep this up, and we're being beaten badly for this.*

And Pharaoh says, *Lazy—you guys are nothing but lazy. You guys want to go take time off for a three-day festival to worship this ... uh ... what was the name ... Yahweh? Right? Same quota.* He says it again. *Same quota, no straw.* He's kind of saying, *Where's your Yahweh now? Where's the God-King now? Because I'm running things.*

What Is Happening? Why Does God Let This Escalate?

What happens here, that God would allow this to continue to escalate? What is He thinking? Well, there are two storylines in an Old Testament narrative, and the one that we can understand down here is what the people are going through. I think God is allowing this to take place because He is pumping up and building up the power and the arrogance of Pharaoh. You can only show how strong you are when you're facing a great opponent. Do you want to see how fast someone is? Have them race next to someone else who is fast. Don't have them race me. The

Dallas Cowboys can't show how—let me say this—the Longhorns can't show how invincible they are if they're playing some St. Mary's girls' football team. You know, it would be like the Aggies playing McNeese. I bet you're proud of yourselves. You can't show how good you are unless you have a good opponent, and I think God is saying, *Come on, Pharaoh, flex. Get up on the scale and weigh in, flex your arms, tell everybody what a mean and angry person you are and how you have all the power.*

And I think that's the lower level, just on the cage fight. But I think there's an upper level. God is looking at His people, and He's seeing that they don't want to leave Egypt. We know that—they say it multiple times. They don't want to leave Egypt. And God needs them to want that. And there's a formula for people when it comes to change, and that is this. The pain of change has to be less than the pain of staying the same. And, as long as it's livable in Egypt, they're going to stay there. They'll deal with that pain because the change of pain is more. So, God says, *Well, we'll let Pharaoh increase the pain of staying where you are, and you'll want to get out of town.* And that's exactly what happens to them. They're going to say, *It's time to leave. It's time to change. It's costing too much.*

There's another reason why God allows this to happen. Yahweh is King, and kings can do whatever they want to do. They don't answer to anyone. Yahweh is King.

Chapter 5 ends with Moses asking these very similar questions. Moses asks two questions: *Why are You allowing this to take place? And two, How are we going to get out of Egypt? Look at Pharaoh, King Pharaoh in all of his power. Why are you allowing this and how is it going to happen?*

Exodus 5:22-23

Moses returned to the LORD and said, “Why O Lord, why have You brought trouble upon this people? Is this why You sent me? ²³ Ever since I went to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has brought trouble upon this people, and You have not rescued Your people at all.”

After this question, chapters 1 through 5 lead up to chapter 6 and the first two paragraphs. Here is Moses asking the questions. “Moses returned to Yahweh and said, ‘Why, O Lord, why have You brought trouble upon this people? Is this why You sent me? Ever since I went to

Pharaoh to speak Your great name, he has brought trouble upon this people, and You have not rescued Your people at all.”

“Why?” --- God’s Answer

All of that is leading to this. Here’s the answer to why. Underline His name as you read through this paragraph. Six times He will say, “I am Yahweh.” That’s why. The question is why, and the answer is who.

Exodus 6:1

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh: Because of my mighty hand he will let them go; because of my mighty hand he will drive them out of his country.”

Verse 1: “Then Yahweh said to Moses, ‘Now is the time you will see what I will do to Pharaoh: Because of my mighty hand he will let them go: Because of my mighty hand he will drive the people out of the country.’” Who’s flexing now? Yahweh is.

Exodus 6:2-5

God also said to Moses, “I am the LORD. ³ I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself fully known to them. ⁴ I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, where they resided as foreigners. ⁵ Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the Israelites, whom the Egyptians are enslaving, and I have remembered my covenant.

Also “God said to Moses, ‘I am Yahweh. I appeared to Abraham, I appeared to Isaac, I appeared to Jacob as God Almighty, but my name is Yahweh. I did not make myself fully known to them. I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, where they resided as foreigners. Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the Israelites, whom the Egyptians are enslaving, and I have remembered my covenant with them.’” Look at how many times it says

“covenant.” God says, “I AM.” What’s the answer? It is His formal, personal pronoun. That’s the answer to why.

What was that smug question? “Who is Yahweh, that I should obey Him? Who is Yahweh, that I should let His people go?” And He’s calling out Moses here—he’s about to get introduced. Yahweh is on the scale now, Yahweh is flexing. He’s saying, “My mighty hand,” and in the next paragraph, “My outreached arms.” *You’ll see. Everyone will know my name. As a matter of fact, that’s the theme of Exodus itself—so that everyone will know my proper name. All through Genesis they kind of knew my name a little bit, but they knew me for my title, God Almighty, El Shaddai. But now things change. Now we’re going to make my name known.*

Sometimes you think you know God and you really don’t at all. And Yahweh is more than God Almighty here. You can count the time—fourteen times in Exodus—“so that the world will know that I am God.”

“But How?” – God’s Answer

The second question that he asks is how. How are you going to free us? Have you seen the power of Pharaoh? He does whatever he wants. You can count this time and underline these words: “I will.” But look how it starts. It starts with, “I am Yahweh.” Pay attention to how it ends.

Exodus 6:6-8

“Therefore, say to the Israelites: ‘I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. ⁷ I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. ⁸ And I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession.’”

Verse 6 says, “ ‘Therefore, say to the Israelites: “I am Yahweh, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will

redeem you with an outstretched, strong arm and with mighty acts of judgment. I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God.”””

Here it comes again. “ ‘ “And then you will know that I am the Yahweh your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. And I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, Isaac and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession.””” And He signs it, “ ‘ “I am Yahweh.”””

Can you see and imagine this power thing that’s going on here? It starts and it ends with “I am Yahweh—that all will know that is my formal name, and that Yahweh is King.” The whole purpose, the whole point of chapters 4 to 15—read it—is that Yahweh will make His name famous. He’s going to make it memorable. And when we say that He makes His name known—“That you will know that I am Yahweh”—“known” is experiential. The ten plagues, the Red Sea—it’s existential. It’s harrowing. It’s vivid. They they might know ...

Eight time during the plagues, six times in other parts of the Exodus itself--“That you might know ...” And in this section particularly, Yahweh wants us to know about two attributes that can change the way that we perceive life. Two attributes of God are discussed here that the Jews will cling to and hold onto, and we should too, because this part of “I am Yahweh.”

Attribute #1: Yahweh Is Our Covenant Keeper

And the first one is that Yahweh is our covenant keeper. Every time you see the word “covenant” is any of these passages, circle that. And it means that God is the promise maker and God is the promise keeper. And He made promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He keeps bringing that up. And you need to know that in comparison, in contrast to any other god and the ones that we make up in our heads, God is saying, *Look, you cling to this*. And this is what Jews would brag about.

What God do you serve?

Yahweh.

Well, what’s so special about Him?

Oh, I’ll tell you what’s special about Him. He’ll make a promise and He’ll swear by His own name. He’ll keep a promise. And we can hold Him to that promise. We can appease our God and say, “Hey, You promised. You swore by Your own name, so You have to do it.”

God is obligated by His promise. The other gods would say, “Yeah, I made that promise, but I don’t care. I changed my mind.” That’s not Yahweh.

And so, when you look at that in the context of the promises God applied to your life, you should be overcome with peace, a sense of stability, a resting soul. I can say with great confidence, there’s a one hundred percent chance I’ll spend eternity with God. Oh, I’m going to heaven. It’s not bragging, it’s appealing to the promises of God. And He promised me that whoever has the Son has life, and he who does not have the Son does not have life. And I’m telling you this so that you can know and have eternal life. He made that promise. And when I get to heaven’s gates and they say, “Why should I let you in?” “Because God swore by His own name, now get these gates open.” That sounds cocky—no, it’s the confidence in the promises of God and the nature of God being a promise keeper.

So, listen, if you find yourself saturated by fear in the hospital room or overwhelmed with sorrow in a funeral home and you can feel yourself drifting off and thinking, *I feel like God is distant from me*, would you stop and think, *What God?* Because Yahweh said He would never leave you, He would never forsake you. That was Yahweh, King Yahweh, who made that promise.

The great application for just this truth would be to do a search of the promises of God and know this with those promises: that Yahweh is a covenant keeper.

Attribute #2: Yahweh Is Our Lone Redeemer

The second attribute here that is pronounced throughout this is that Yahweh is the lone redeemer. He never says “we”—there’s no plural. “I will take you out”—“I will set you free”—“I will redeem you”---“I will be the one who brings you back.” And “I will judge Egypt.” The whole point of all of that is that Yahweh is King and king alone. There’s only room for one on that throne.

And you can say this about the truth of your redemption and your salvation. It is by Yahweh alone, by faith alone, by grace alone because it’s Yahweh alone. You think you have a salvation where you’re in that because of your good works? It’s not biblical salvation. It’s not just-Yahweh salvation. Because the redemption is all with Yahweh.

So, if that's confusing to you, if you don't think you have a hundred percent chance of going to heaven and that's impossible, or if you're not sure about what you were involved in in salvation, contact our church. Let's have a conversation with one of our pastors or lay ministers. We'll let you know what this means.

There is more to Yahweh than God Almighty—much more. Sometimes you think you know someone, and you don't know them at all. Here comes this passage invading us. And if you don't know Yahweh as King, you don't know Yahweh. He's a king. He rules. He does what He wants whenever He wants. And we serve without asking questions.

If you look closely, you can see in the Bible that you can call Him "Father." You can even call Him "Daddy." The Bible says to do that. But while He's your father, He never stops being Yahweh the King. In your prayer times I hope you feel an intimacy towards God, so much so that He's your friend. The Bible says that you can call God your friend. And in that friendship, He, never for a moment, stops being King Yahweh. His name is Yahweh. He is King. We owe Him our service and our worship and our giving because we belong to Him. And there is no better God to belong to.

I'm going to pray.

Lord Jesus, we are grateful that You have given us access to the triune head of Yahweh. We are grateful that the Father has chosen in His wisdom and His power to place us here and now for a time to maximize the way we can give glory to the name Yahweh. Lord, I'd ask You to help us to apply some of these truths and principles about who You are and what You're like, so that we can claim the promises, knowing that You can't be certain ways. You can't lie, You can't change, You can't withhold something that You've promised. So, we would cling to this covenant-making Yahweh and enjoy.

Lord, in our journey to know You better, I'd ask that You would open our eyes to ways that we don't fathom Your greatness, and that You would insert Your Spirit into that, that we might know You and enjoy You in a whole new way. Sometimes we think we know someone, and we don't. I think we don't know You the way we should. And we look forward to knowing You forever. We pray this in Jesus' name. And all God's people said, Amen.