

# The Servant



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*The purpose of this newsletter is to pass along information and ideas to help the Lord's servants as they minister to others. Feel free to use any of it in your ministry*

## More than Magic

*"And Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments." Ex. 7:11*

America has its amusement parks and its Magic Kingdoms. God wants us to have more. The Egyptian wise men met Moses head on in the war of wonders. Salvation involves "a war of words," "a war of wills, and "a war of wonders." Aaron cast the rod to the ground and it became a serpent. Aaron's rod becoming a serpent was God's validation of the message, "Let my people go." The Egyptians, however, had to resort to "enchantments." For a moment Pharaoh must have felt equal to the battle, but he was not.

Let us all understand the difference. When man does it, it is magic. When God does it, it is miracle. Don't settle for magic. Houdini, the great magician, always concealed a small key somewhere on his body which he used to unlock his chains. He was a master of illusion. Unfortunately, men are too easily impressed with magic. Magic is "sight of hand." Magic is illusion. Magic is "smoke and mirrors." When man does it, we are fooled. When God does it, it is a fact; and it is awesome.

Religion is mostly magic. It is filled with superstition and showmanship. Salvation, on the other hand, is not "sight of hand," rather it is "might of hand." Aaron's serpent swallowed the Egyptian's serpents. How they did it is unimportant. Whether they used drugs or demons changes nothing. The wonders of Moses were meant only to underscore the veracity of the Word of God, and in the end, all the wisdom of the world, like the magic of Egypt, will be swallowed up by truth: for God's Word is true.

Someone said, "When God is not working in the church we have to make a lot of oyster stew." I hear a lot of pots rattling in church kitchens these days. Now, there is nothing wrong with a good bowl of soup now and then, but woe to the assembly that substitutes soup for the supernatural. God wants us to want more.

Let us not settle for imitations. Let us not give in to fear and superstition. Let us simply speak the word in love knowing that we need no greater miracle than the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the "wonder of wonders" found in God's love for sinners already demonstrated for us on the cross.

### Ancient Wonder of the World

Pyramids rise from Egypt's sands  
And men look up in awe  
Impressed by work of mortal hands  
To God I look for more

With Moses  
I remove my shoes  
To stand on sacred ground  
But in Christ  
there is better news  
A greater gospel sound

If I but come by faith alone  
And bring my broken heart  
And not deny the guilt I own  
Then Christ will do his part

With blood he'll wash all sin away  
And take away God's thunder  
And pay sin's debt I could not pay  
Now THIS is life's greatest wonder

## “Let my People Go”

Satan, like Pharaoh, does not want you to “Go.” The message was clear and simple, “Let my people go that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness” (Ex. 5:2). After it became obvious that Moses was not going to give up, Pharaoh attempted to negotiate. Satan also wants us to settle for something less than full salvation. He offered four alternative proposals to substitute for God’s plan.

**1. Stay in Egypt.** Stay “in the land” Ex. 8:25. It was as if he was saying, “You can be a worldly Christian. You can believe all you want, just stay where you are.” The problem with that is “we can’t stay where we are” and be where God wants us to be. Salvation is a Journey. We must forsake Egypt. Abraham had to leave Ur, Lot had to leave Sodom, the Prodigal must leave the pig-pen. Noah “condemned” the world. It is a lie of the Devil, that we can have faith without following, life without leaving, or a crown without a cross. Stay in Egypt? We would just as soon stay on the Titanic, for with all its splendor it is destined to the deep. Don’t compromise.

**2. Don’t go too far.** Don’t “go very far” Ex. 8:28. If Satan can’t keep you from going, he will at least try to keep you from going far. The modern day Pharaoh’s say “don’t get carried away” with all this religious stuff. Don’t be an extremist or a fanatic. A little religion is alright, but just “don’t go too far.” Many take his advice. They settle right on the border of worldliness. They hug the boundary. They live in the shadow of the Sphinx. The problem with listening to Pharaoh’s advice to not “go very far,” is that in your spiritual life you will “not go far.” Those who hug the shore line

never see God’s wonders in the deep. Only those who are willing to “go far” with God enter the gates of his Kingdom. Let’s determine from the beginning that once we agree to going, we must go all the way.

**3. Keep it Private and Personal.** “Ye that are men” go but leave your families behind (Ex. 10:11). It was as if Pharaoh was saying, “If you have to embrace the Bible, please keep it to yourself. At least don’t be one of these Evangelicals. If you want to go, fine, but leave those you love here in Egypt. Just the men, please. ”

Today he would say, “just the women and children please” for that is what most churches are made up of. Somehow he has convinced people that this “Church stuff” is alright for women and children. No wonder, when children are no longer willing to be called children (teens and young adults) they will forsake the church and leave in droves, because, of course, church is for “women and children.”

**4. Salvation without Service.** Go if you must, but may “your flocks be stayed” (Ex. 10:24). Leave your cattle here. Cattle constituted their wealth, their food, their basic necessities of life, but it was something more than that. The cattle were necessary if there was to be sacrifice. Satan does not want us to have a faith that involves any sacrifice. There is, however, no real faith without it. Service and sacrifice are the evidences of a genuine life of faith. Moses, Hebrews tells us gave up the riches of Egypt to have Christ. Faith can do no less. We are saved to serve.

Moses was faithful in delivering God’s message to Pharaoh, the representative head of the world. May we faithfully declare the plain “thus saith the LORD” making no concessions which may lead to false professions. □

## Sinners In De-Nile

Egypt has been called the “gift of the Nile.” It had always been a mystery. Its head waters are high in equatorial Africa and its discovery eluded Livingston who died while in search of it. Plutarch, the Greek historian, said the Egyptians called the Nile their “Father and Savior.” Once a year the banks of the river would overflow and deposit nutrition rich silt along its banks. The Egyptians worshipped the river and the deity they claimed lived in it. The Nile was the “glory” of Egypt. It was their pride and joy.

Those who will not respond to God’s gentleness will bow before his judgment. The Pharaoh who would not “give in” to the pleas would eventually “give up” to the plagues. God turned the blue waters of the Nile to blood. He touched their “glory” and it became a “bloody stinking mess” (Ex. 8:17-18). God cursed their Pride and Joy in judgment.

What is your “Pride and Joy.” If it is anything other than Jesus, think again. Paul said “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world” (Gal. 6:14)

*He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” Jn. 7:38*



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