

20 POWERFUL AND DRAMATIC DELIVERANCES IN THE BIBLE.

Deliverance: To release, to set free or to rescue from captivity or danger.

1. NOAH AND HIS FAMILY



GEN 6:13 – 22 / GEN 7:1- 24 / GEN 8, 9: 1-11.

Noah's godly life was a powerful contrast to the wicked lives of his contemporaries. Noah was the tenth generation from Adam. The period represents one of the Bible's most vivid descriptions of the total depravity of mankind. People were inwardly corrupt, outwardly violent and upwardly rebellious. God was grieved and decided to wipe mankind away from the face of the earth. God was very patient and gave the world at least 120 years of opportunity to be saved {Gen 6:3/1Per 3:20/2Pet 2:5} The world refused Noah's witness and rejected God's grace up to the very day Noah and his family entered the Ark. But Noah found grace with God and God therefore delivered Noah and his family of seven {2 Pet 2:5 / Heb 11:7}. The story of Noah's deliverance from

the flood foreshadows God's full redemption of mankind through his son Jesus Christ.

2. LOT AND HIS FAMILY



GEN 18:20-23 / GEN 19:1-29.

The wickedness of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah had made them ripe for destruction. They had become cesspools of evil and utter depravity. But Abraham was God's friend and so God gave him the opportunity to speak in His court and to intercede for the righteous in Sodom and Gomorrah. This exemplifies the great privilege of God's covenant people throughout the ages: God has revealed His purposes to them and allows their voice to be heard {in intercession} in the court of Heaven itself.

Lot had previously been rescued by Abraham's intervention {Gen 14} now he would be rescued by Abraham's intercession.

Abraham called God "The Judge of all the earth" confident that God will do what was right {Deut 32:4}. He exacted from God a promise not to destroy Sodom if ten righteous people could be found there {Gen 18:32}.

And even though there was not ten righteous people in the cities of Gomorrah, the Lord had mercy on Lot, his wife and their two daughters and brought them out of the catastrophe that befell the two cities.

The Lord caused burning sulphur to rain down on the cities and totally destroyed them and all in it.

Lot's deliverance was both God's answer to Abraham's prayer and because deliverance is due to Divine Mercy and not to human righteousness {Titus 3:5}. Even

though they were told to run and not look back, Lot's wife unfortunately disobeyed by turning to look and at once became a pillar of salt{Gen 19:26 / Luke 17: 31-32}.

3. JACOB: DECIEVER, OUTCAST AND ON THE RUN.



GEN 27:19-25 .41-45 / GEN 28:10-15 / GEN 29:16-28 / GEN 30:25-43 / GEN 31 & 32.

Jacob and his mother Rebecca manipulated Isaac's last will and testament. Jacob, whose very name signifies deceit, and ever the schemer, proves deceitful in obtaining both the birthright of the firstborn {Gen 25:29-34} and the Blessings thereby earning the hatred of his brother Esau. For even though Esau tried to separate the birthright from the Blessing, the former led inevitably to the latter since both involved the inheritance of the firstborn. His bitter tears could bring about no change of mind {Heb 12:16-17}. He says, "Isn't he rightly named Jacob? He took my birthright and now he's taken my Blessing! {Gen 27:36}. Esau's fierce hostility towards Jacob leads to Jacob fleeing from Canaan to Haran in Mesopotamia for the next 20 years.

On the first night of his journey with all his future very uncertain, he camps and sleeps with a stone as his pillow, and in a dream, God reveals Himself to Jacob and promises him Deliverance, Protection and Provisions{Gen 28:10-15}. However in Haran, his uncle Laban tricks him into serving him for seven more years for the hand of his daughter Rachel instead of Leah .So Jacob the deceiver in name as well as in behavior is himself deceived. The one who had tried

everything to obtain the benefits of the firstborn had now, against his will, received the firstborn{Gen 29:16,26}. Jacob fulfills his commitments and with his accounts squared with Laban, asks for permission to leave, intent on taking only his family with him{Gen 30:26}.

Laban however continues to cheat Jacob at every turn{Gen 31:7} but God delivers Jacob from poverty and suffering by sending an Angel who in a dream reveals to Jacob a supernatural way of mating the flocks resulting in making Jacob wealthy ,for it is He that gives the power to get wealth{Deut 8:18}. But as he had earlier fled from Esau{Gen 27:42-43} Jacob devious dealings produces hostility from which again he had to flee from Laban{Gen 31:20-21}. But God intervenes again on Jacobs behalf by warning perusing Laban in a dream not to harm Jacob in any way{Gen 31:24}. Then now comes the real trouble that Jacob had long been dreading; meeting with his brother Esau again. He knew it was payback time. But after Jacob leaves the region of the hostile Laban and is about to enter the region of the hostile Esau, he was met by the Angels{Gen 32:1} of God, whom he had seen at Bethel when he was fleeing from Esau to go to Laban{Gen 28:12}. But now Jacob remembers that Esau had vowed to kill him{Gen 27:41} and so he cries out for God's continual protection and prays, "O God of my father Abraham....you have said, 'I will surely make you prosper and will make your descendants like the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted'".{Gen 32:9-12}. And so later when Jacob was left alone, as he had also been at Bethel{Gen 28:10-22} God Himself in the form of an Angel{Hosea 12:3-4} wrestled with him.

Jacob had struggled all his life to prevail, first with Esau, then with Laban. Now, as he was about to re-enter Canaan, he was shown that it was with God Himself that he must 'wrestle'-not with Esau or any other human being. God came to him in such a form that Jacob could wrestle with Him successfully, yet he showed Jacob that He could disable him at will{Gen 32:25}. Jacob's persistence was rewarded as he said, 'I will not let you go unless you Bless me{Gen 32:26} and so Jacob finally now acknowledged God as the source of Blessing, as he was

about to re-enter the promised Land. The Lord also acknowledged Jacob as His servant by changing his name to Israel {Gen 32:28}. So here the nation of Israel got its name and characterization: as the people who struggle with God {memorialized in the name Jacob} and overcome. God later confirms Jacob's new name {Gen 35:10} and confirmed the Blessings of Abraham and Isaac through him.

The following day, God gives Jacob now Israel Deliverance, Protection and Favor from his brother Esau.

4. JOSEPH: PRINCE AMONG HIS BROTHERS.



GEN 37:19-32 / GEN 39:11-23 / GEN 41:39-44.

Joseph, more than any other, represented Israel-as a people who struggled with both God and human beings and overcame, and becomes a source of Blessing to the nations.

Also you see in him a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. Joseph was greatly beloved by His father {Gen 37:3 / Matt 3:17} hated and envied by his brothers {John 15:25/Mark 15:10}, plotted against, sold as a slave, arrested unjustly, and made to suffer. But he went from suffering to glory and became the savior of the people who had rejected him.

It is, moreover, through the life of Joseph that the covenant family in Canaan becomes an emerging nation in Egypt, thus setting the stage for the Exodus. Joseph is given a richly ornamented coat, a coat of many colors {Gen 37:3} which represented a badge of favoritism and possibly indicating Jacob's intention to make Joseph heir to the birthright. Joseph's dreams of his own ascendancy{Gen 37:5-10}further aggravates matters and so he is sold into slavery because of his brother's hatred and he then finds himself in Egypt at the tender age of 17. In Egypt, Joseph though innocent of any wrongdoing would be stripped of his position of privilege in Potiphars house and thrown into prison. Though Joseph's situation is changed drastically, God's relationship to him remains the same and was with him throughout his ordeals {Gen 39:3, 21, 23 / Acts 7:9}.God then gives Joseph the interpretation of 2 dreams which prepares the way for Joseph to be used by God to interpret the Pharaoh's dreams {Gen 41} leading to the subsequent fulfillment of Josephs childhood two dreams before he was sold into slavery {Gen 37:5-11} by his brothers. So in just 13 years, Joseph had become second-in command in Egypt at the age of 30. {Gen 41:43}.

God therefore delivers Joseph from the hatred of his brothers, from slavery and from prison and makes him ruler over all Egypt.

Joseph, 17yrs old at the time of his enslavement and after 21yrs later he sees his brothers again and they all bow down to him in fulfillment of Josephs dreams{Gen 42:6}.

5. BABY MOSES.



EXODUS CHAPTERS 1 & 2.

A new King who did not know about Joseph came to power in Egypt and he enslaved the Israelites and put slave masters over them to oppress them. But the more the Israelites were oppressed the more they multiplied and spread. The Egyptians being afraid of them made their lives bitter with hard labor and then the King ordered the Hebrew midwives to put to death any Hebrew male born child, because baby boys are potential warriors and fathers.

The midwives however feared God and disobeyed him so failing to accomplish his purposes through the midwives; the Pharaoh mobilized all the Egyptians to deal with the Israelite threat by killing all baby boys of the Hebrews by throwing them into the Nile.

It was at this time that Moses was born and his mother hid him for 3 months and when she could hide him no longer, she made a papyrus basket coated it with tar and pitch and placed Moses in it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. His sister watched and miraculously the basket was discovered by no other person than the Pharaohs daughter.

After the basket was fetched, she opened it and saw a baby crying and felt sorry for him. Then Moses sister who had been hiding approached the Pharaohs daughter and offered to help find one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for her.

So Moses mother got paid to raise Moses and when he grew older, she took him to Pharaohs daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, ' I drew him out of the water'.

Moses' mother so thoroughly instilled the traditions of his people in him in childhood that all the splendor and temptations of the heathen palace never eradicated those early impressions. He had the finest education Egypt could offer, but it did not turn his head or cause him to lose his childhood faith.

6. THE ISRAELITES EXODUS FROM EGYPT.



EXODUS 12:29-44 / EX 14: 27-31.

God had promised Abraham that after Israel had served for 400 years of affliction in Egypt, they would come out with great possessions {Gen 15:14 / Ps 105:37}.

After 430 years of harsh slavery in the Land of Egypt {Ex 1:8-14}, The Word of the Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob {Israel} comes through Moses 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...I am the Lord". {Ex 6:2-8}. God delivers Israel with signs and wonders including the death of every firstborn son in Egypt.

The Israelites leave Egypt having plundered the Egyptians of all their wealth {Ex 12:35-36}. But Pharaoh and his officials change their mind, saying, "What have we done? We have let the Israelites go and have lost their services!" {Ex 14:5}. So the Egyptians pursued the Israelites with 600 of their best chariots along with all the other chariots of Egypt and ambushed them at the Red Sea. But the Lord

opened a path through the Red Sea for the Israelites to pass through to the other side on dry ground. The Lord fought for Israel that day and swept all of the horsemen and army and chariots of Egypt into the Red Sea and they all drowned.

Not one of them survived. {Ex 14:27-28}.

7. RAHAB AND HER FAMILY.



JOSHUA 2 / JOSHUA 6: 15-23.

Joshua sends 2 Israelite spies on a reconnaissance and espionage mission of the city of Jericho reputed to be impregnable because of her walls. Once inside the walls of the fortified city of Jericho, the King was told of their presence and also that they had gone into the house of a prostitute named Rehab and that they were still there.

So the King of Jericho sends a message to Rahab to bring out the men because they had come to spy on the whole land.

But Rahab had taken the 2 men and hidden them under the stalks of flax which she had on her rooftop. Rahab's cunning saves the lives of the 2 Israelites even though she put her own life in Jeopardy.

Rahab's confession to the spies before they laid down for the night sums up the news about the Lord that occasioned both the fear of the people of Jericho and Rahab's abandonment of Canaan and its gods to side with the God of Israel

{Joshua 2:8-11}. That the hearts of the Canaanites were ‘melting in fear’ {Vs 9} was vital information to the spies.

The whole outcome of the spies venture into Jericho hinges on her actions. Rahab had acted towards the spies as a friend of Israel {by hiding them from capture and also sending them on their way successfully {Joshua 2:15-16} by letting them down by a rope from her house on the wall. She however exacted from the 2 spies a pledge and promise of her safety and for all her family who happen to be with her in her house on the day of the fall of the city.

She was to hang a scarlet cord in the window of her house. The scarlet cord tied in the window of her house indicated that the household was not to be harmed. The function of this red marker was similar to the purpose of the blood of the Passover lamb on the doorposts in Egypt when the firstborn of Egypt died but the firstborn of the Israelites were spared {Ex 12:13,22-23}. And so when eventually the city of Jericho fell to the Israelites, Joshua spared Rahab with her family and all who belonged to her and she was accepted among the Israelites {Joshua 6:25}.

She became a convert to the God of Israel and a famous woman among the Hebrews. She is honored in the New Testament for her faith, and named among the heroes of faith {Heb 11:31} and her good work {James 2:25}.

8. THE ISRAELITES DELIVERANCES FROM VARIOUS ENEMIES THROUGH THE HELP OF DIFFERENT JUDGES.



JUDGES 2:10-23 / JUDGES chapters 3-16.

After the death of Joshua and all of his generation, the next generation of Israelites forgot the Lord and what he had done for Israel. They sinned against the Lord and began to serve the Baal's and stopped worshipping the God of their ancestors who had brought them out of Egypt. They began to worship the gods of the people around them, the Baal's and the Astarte's or Ashtoreth's. The Lord was furious and let raiders attack and rob them. They could no longer protect themselves. Every time they went into battle, the Lord was against them and they were in great distress. This was a period or time after the death of Joshua and his generation, which was characterized by recurring cycles of apostasy, oppression, cries of distress and gracious Divine Deliverance.

It was a time of Israelite unfaithfulness to the Lord and of their surrender to the allurements of Canaan. Only by the mercies of God was Israel not overwhelmed and absorbed by the pagan nations around them. The only forward movement of Gods plan of redemption through Israel came with the Lords servant David and the establishment of his dynasty.

These were times of frequent apostasy, provoking Divine chastenings, bringing urgent appeals and cries of distress to God from the Israelites, moving God to raise up leaders, deliverers or Judges through whom he threw off their foreign oppressors and restoring short times of peace only for the whole cycle to start again.

There were 6 major deliverers or Judges that God raised up and 6 minor Judges.

The 6 major Judges were:

1. OTHNIEL :{ 3:7-11}, who defeats Cushan-Rishathaim, King of Aram to whom the Israelites were subject to for 8 years.

2. EHUD :{ 3:12-30}, A lone hero from the tribe of Benjamin who delivers Israel from the oppression of Moab after 18 years of oppression.

3. DEBORAH:{CHPS 4-5},A woman Prophetess from the tribe of Ephraim, who defeats and delivers Israel from Jabin,King of Canaan who with 900 iron chariots under his army commander,Sisera had cruelly oppressed Israel for 20 years.

4. GIDEON:{CHPS 6-8},He is of the tribe of Manasseh and he leads 300 men against the Midianites whose oppression against Israel was so powerful, the Israelites hid from them in caves and other safe shelters in the hills. Whenever the Israelites sowed any seed, the midianites would come with the Amalekites and the desert tribes and attack them. They would camp on the land and destroy all the crops. They would take all the sheep, cattle and donkeys and leave nothing for the Israelites to live on. They and their camels were too too many to count. They would come with their livestock and tents, as thick as locusts and they devastated the land and the Israelites were helpless against them. This continued for 7 years and the people of Israel cried out to the Lord for help against the Midianites. So the Lord raised up Gideon as a deliverer over Israel who with 300 men and with only broken jars and torches and with trumpet blasts routed the whole army of the midianites who then fled with Gideon and Israel in hot pursuit and having already killed 120,000 of them, he surprised the Midianite army led by their 2 Kings Zebah and Zalmunna, capturing them and killing them himself. So Midian was defeated by the Israelites and was no longer a threat. The land was at peace for 40 years until Gideon died.

5. JEPHTHAH :{ CHPS 11 & 12}

A social outcast from the tribe of Manasseh becomes deliverer of Israel at a time when Israel is being threatened by a coalition of powers under the King of Ammon. The Israelites once again had abandoned the Lord and stopped worshipping Him and were worshipping the gods Baal, Astartes and others, so the Lord became angry with the Israelites, and let the Philistines and the

Ammonites conquer them. And for 18 years they oppressed and persecuted all the Israelites. The Ammonites even crossed the Jordan to fight the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and Ephraim.

And Israel was in great distress. Then the Israelites cried out to the Lord. At first the Lord told them to go and cry out to the false gods they were worshipping. But the people of Israel said to the Lord, 'We have sinned. Do whatever You like, but please save us today {10:14 &15}.

So they got rid of their false gods and worshipped the Lord and He became troubled or was grieved over Israel's distress and misery.

God then raised Jephthah up to deliver Israel. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah and he made a promise to the Lord, 'If You give me Victory over the Ammonites, I will burn as an offering the first person that comes out of my house to meet me when I come back from the Victory, I will offer that person to You as a sacrifice''.

Jephthah fought the Ammonites and the Lord gave him victory. There was a great slaughter and the Ammonites were defeated by Israel. On his return home to Mizpeh, the first person to meet him was his daughter who came out dancing and playing the tambourine and she was his only child.

Even though Jephthah was distressed and tore his clothes and cried,'O my daughter! You have made me miserable and wretched, because I have made a vow to the Lord that I cannot break''. And due to his vow, he offered her as a sacrifice to the Lord {11:34-39}.

Jephthah led Israel for 6 years. Then he died.

6. SAMSON :{ CHPS 13-16}.

Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord, so the Lord delivered them into the hands of the Philistines for 40 years.

But seeing the distress of Israel, the Lord raised up a lone hero from the tribe of Dan called Samson, who begins to deliver the Israelites from the Philistines. He was eventually captured by the Philistines having been betrayed by his lover,

Delilah, a seductress who revealed the source of his supernatural strength to the Philistines for money {16:18-21}.

He was put in prison but on a certain day, the Philistine Kings met together to celebrate and offer a great sacrifice to their god, Dagon.

They sang, 'our god has given us victory over our enemy, Samson'.

Samson was then brought out from prison and made to stand between 2 great pillars. The building was crowded with men and women and all the Philistine Kings were there, with about 3,000 men and women on the rooftops watching Samson entertain them.

Then Samson prayed, 'Sovereign Lord, please remember me, please God, give me strength just once more so that I can get even with the Philistines for putting out my 2 eyes'. And then taking hold of the 2 pillars holding the building, he pushed against them and shouted, 'Let me die with the Philistines!'. He pushed with all his might and the building fell down on the 5 Kings and everyone else. So Samson killed more people at his death than he had killed during his life. His brothers and the rest of the family came and took his body and buried him. He had been Israel's deliverer for 20 years.

The 6 Minor Judges were:

1. SHAMGAR :{ 3:31}
2. TOLA :{ 10:1-2}
3. JAIR :{ 10:3-5}
4. IBZAN :{ 12:8-10}
5. ELON :{ 12:11-12}
6. ABDON :{ 12:13-15}

9. DAVID AND ISRAEL FROM GOLIATH AND THE PHILISTINES.



1 SAMUEL 17.

Now the Philistines gathered their forces for war against the Israelites and King Saul and the Israelites also assembled their forces.

The Philistines occupied one hill and the Israelites the other, with a valley between them.

But then a champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp to challenge Israel to a man to man combat and he was over 9 feet tall and his armor weighed about 120 pounds, and his spearhead alone weighed about 15 pounds.

The entire army of Israel was immobilized by fear because of this giant of a man. And he would come out to the valley and roar with threats and mockery, challenging and frightening the whole nation of Israel both by his appearance and by his voice. And there was not a man in the whole of King Saul's great army who was willing to go and fight this Philistine giant. And for 40 days this Philistine came forward every morning and evening to challenge and defy the whole Israel nation.

But Israel was delivered that day by the boy David, a young man with faith in his heart and God in his soul. He had been sent to the battlefield or the Israelites camp by Jesse, his father to take some provisions to his 3 brothers who were in the Israelite army.

On encountering and seeing this ungodly Philistine challenging and defying the armies of the Living God, he said to Saul, ' Let no mans heart fail because of him,

for your servant will go and fight this Philistine”.Refusing Saul’s amour he selected 5 smooth stones, and with his sling went to meet Goliath.

As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him and he slung a stone that sank into Goliaths forehead and he fell face down.

David then ran and stood over him and taking Goliaths sword killed him and cut off his head with Goliaths sword.

And so that day Israel was delivered from shame and reproach.

10. KING HEZEKIAH, JERUSALEM AND JUDAH.



2 KINGS 18:28-36 / 2 KING 19:1-37 / 2 CHRON 32:1-23

God delivers Jerusalem and Judah from Sennacherib of Assyria in a dramatic fashion by sending an Angel who goes to the Assyrian camp at night and killed a hundred and eighty-five thousand men of the Assyrians. When the Assyrians get up the following morning, there were dead bodies all over the place. So Sennacherib, King of Assyria broke camp and returned to Nineveh. This all powerful enemy of Israel had come with all the military might of Assyria. And the King of Assyria then sent his supreme Commander, his chief officer and his field commander to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem with a taunting message, and they were met by a delegation from King Hezekiah compromising Eliakim.son of

Hilkiah, the Palace Administrator, then Shebua, the secretary and Joah son of Asaph the recorder. The field commander of the Assyrians then addressed them with clear intimidation and not in Aramaic, the language of commerce and diplomacy, but in Hebrew, so that all the Israelite people listening could understand {2 Kings 18:17-37}. This was designed to destroy Israel's morale and they even capped it by ridiculing Jehovah the God of Israel, saying even He could not deliver Israel from the hands of King Sennacherib of Assyria. {2 Kings 18:19-35}. The 3 men delegation of Israel returned to King Hezekiah with their clothes torn and told him all that the field commander had said. When King Hezekiah heard this, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and went into the temple of the Lord, and sent Eliakim, the Palace Administrator, Shebua, the secretary and the leading Priests to the Prophet Isaiah, son of Amoz. And they told him, ' This is what Hezekiah says: ' This day is a day of distress and rebuke and disgrace. It may be that the Lord your God will hear all the words of the field commander, whom his master, the King of Assyria, has sent to ridicule the Living God.

And so for this cause, King Hezekiah and the Prophet Isaiah, son of Amoz cried out in prayer to Heaven about this. And the Lord sent an Angel who annihilated all the fighting men and the leaders and officers in the camp of the Assyrian King. And so he withdrew to his own land in disgrace. And when he went into the temple of his god, some of his sons cut him down with the sword. So the Lord saved Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib King of Assyria. He took care of Israel on every side.

11. JEHOSHAPHAT AND ALL OF JUDAH



2 CHRON 20:1-30.

It was told King Jehoshaphat of Judah that a vast army from Edom was coming from the other side of the Dead Sea to attack Judah. Jehoshaphat was frightened and prayed to the Lord. Then he gave orders for a fast to be observed throughout the country. From every town and city of Judah people hurried to Jerusalem to ask the Lord for guidance. Then Jehoshaphat stood before the assembled people who had gathered in the new courtyard of the temple and prayed aloud and long to God about the trouble and ended by saying, ' we don't know what to do, but we look to you for help''. And all the men of Judah, with their wives and children just stood before the Lord. Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon a Levite, Jahaziel, who said, ' listen King Jehoshaphat and all who live in Jerusalem! Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army, for the battle is not yours but God's. Tomorrow march down against them. You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions, stand firm and see the deliverance the Lord will give you''.

So Jehoshaphat bowed with his face to the ground and all the people of Judah and Jerusalem fell down in worship before the Lord.

So early the next morning they started out with Jehoshaphat encouraging them to trust in the Lord. After consultation the King ordered musicians to march ahead of the army singing, ' Praise the Lord! His love is Eternal!'' .As they began to sing, the Lord threw the invading armies into a panic. The Ammonites and the Moabites attacked the Edomite army and completely destroyed it, and then they

turned on each other in savage fighting. By the time the Judean army reached where they could look toward the vast army, they saw that they were all lying on the ground dead. No one had escaped.

12. JEWISH PEOPLES GREAT DELIVERANCE DURING THE REIGN OF KING XERXES AND QUEEN ESTHER.



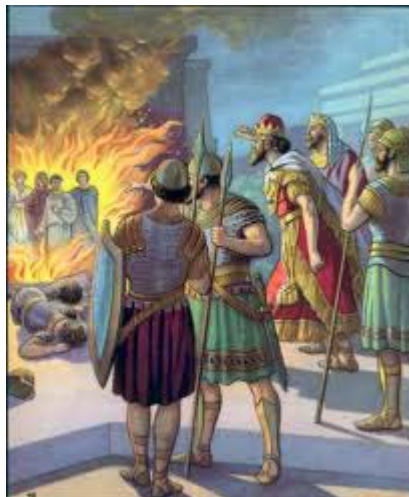
ESTHER 3:12-14 / ESTHER 4:1-3 & 13-17 / ESTHER 9:1-19 / ESTHER CHP 8.
God delivers the Jews through Esther, a Jewish heroine and an ordinary Jewish Girl, who was made Queen of Persia and who by her deep belief in the God of Israel, and by her great courage and devotion to her people, saved them from being exterminated by their enemies.

King Xerxes had earlier honored Haman, son of Hammedatha to the position of Prime Minister and he lost no time in hatching a plot to destroy all the Jews. This he did by persuading King Xerxes to enact a royal decree to this effect. But Mordecai, the uncle of Queen Esther sent word to Queen Esther to intervene on the behalf of the Jews, with these words, ' Do not think that because you are in the Kings house you alone of all the Jews will escape. For if you remain silent at this time, help or deliverance will come from heaven to the Jews, and they will be saved, but you will die and your father's family will come to an end. Yet who knows-maybe it was for a time like this that you were made Queen'".

Esther then went on a 3 day fast and went before the King unannounced even though this was on pain of death and having got the Kings favor invited him to a banquet where she succeeded in turning the tables on Haman who was then hanged. Since a decree issued by a Persian King could not be changed {Esther 8:8 / Dan 6:15}, the decree for the Jews massacre could not be reversed. But Esther persuaded the King to make another decree that authorizes all the Jews in the Kingdom of Persia to resist, defend and protect themselves and to slay or destroy all their enemies who will attack them, which they did. So the Jews killed all their enemies including Hamans 10 sons. And ever since then the 14th and 15th days of the month of Adar became the festival of Purim in remembrance of the day that the Jews rid themselves of their enemies.

It is a day that is observed with feasts and parties and giving of gifts to one another and to the poor. And it is an annual custom among the Jews to this day. The name of God is not mentioned throughout the book of Esther, which is the only book in the entire Bible where God's name is never mentioned, perhaps because it may have been copied from Persian records. Yet God's providential care of His people is nowhere more evident than in this courageous account of beautiful Queen Esther.

13. SHADRACH, MESHACH AND ABEDNEGO.



DANIEL 3: 1-30.

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon ordered a gold statue to be built which was 90 feet high and 9 feet wide and it was to be set up on the plain of Dura. He then commanded all his officials to come from everywhere in his Kingdom to the dedication of the statue. And also that as soon as everyone heard the music and the musical instruments of all kinds, they were to bow down and worship the gold statue.

However the three Jews, who were friends of Daniel, refused to bow down to the statue and to worship it. When this was reported to the King, he was furious and sent for the 3 young men and said, ' I heard that you refuse to worship my gods and the gold statue that I have set up. Now...No god can save you from me'. But the three young men replied, ' Your Majesty, we do not need to defend ourselves. The God we worship can save us from you and your flaming furnace. But even if he doesn't, we still won't worship your gods and the gold statue you have set up'. King Nebuchadnezzar then flew off the handle with rage at the three men for such boldness and challenging words and commanded the furnace to be heated 7 times hotter than usual and he next commanded some of his strongest soldiers to tie up the men and to throw them into the flaming furnace. They threw them in with all their clothes still on and because the fire was so hot the flames leaped out and killed the soldiers.

Then suddenly, the King in astonishment saw 4 men walking around in the fire and then he said the 4th one looked like a god. Then he said, ' you servants of the Most High God, come out at once!'. And when the three men came out, the King's officials all crowded around them and upon examining them discovered that even their clothes didn't smell of smoke and that the fire had no effect whatsoever upon them, none at all.

Then King Nebuchadnezzar praised the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego saying, 'Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego! He sent his Angel and delivered and rescued his servants who trusted in Him! There has never been a god who can pull off a rescue like this.'

And he promoted them to even higher positions in the Province of Babylon.

14. DANIEL FROM THE DEN OF LIONS.



DANIEL 6:4-28.

Daniel was appointed by King Darius as one of the 3 chief administrators in his Kingdom and Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the Satraps by his exceptional qualities that the King planned to set him above and over the whole Kingdom.

At this the other administrators and Satraps tried to find fault or grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs but were unable to find any. They could find neither corruption nor negligence charges against him because he was trustworthy.

Finally they reasoned that the only way to trap Daniel was through something to do with the laws of his God. So they ganged together and succeeded in getting King Darius to issue an edict and enforce the decree that for the next 30 days no one was to pray to any god except to him and that any one who prays to any other god would be thrown into the lions den. But when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home, opened his windows toward Jerusalem and three times a day as usual got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God.

So he was thrown into the lions den much to the dismay of the King who realized he had been tricked by the Administrators and tried all day to get Daniel out of this fix but at the end of the day the jealous administrators came back and reminded the King of the decree that cannot be changed according to the law of the Medes and Persians.

But God sent an Angel to shut the mouths of the Lions and the following day he was still miraculously alive.

The King was overjoyed and when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

Then the King commanded the men who had falsely accused Daniel to be brought and thrown into the lion's den, along with with their wives and children and before they reached the floor of the den, the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

15. JONAH FROM THE BELLY OF THE GREAT FISH.



JONAH CHAPTERS 1 & 2.

God sent the Prophet Jonah to go to the great city of Nineveh and to preach against it, because of its wickedness. But Jonah ran away from before the Lord and headed for Tarshish after finding a ship in Joppa.

But the Lord sent a great wind on the sea and there was such a violent storm, that the ship threatened to break up. After casting of lots, Jonah was picked and so he then confessed to being the reason for all their troubles and at his request,

even though they initially didn't want to, he was thrown overboard. But the Lord provided a great fish to swallow Jonah and Jonah was inside the fish for three days and three nights.

Then from inside the fish Jonah prayed to the Lord his God. And the Lord commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah unto dry land.

Then the Lord commanded Jonah a second time to go preach against Nineveh and this time Jonah obeyed the Lord and went to Nineveh.

16. THE CHILD JESUS FROM HEROD.



MATTHEW 2:1-21.

God delivered the child Jesus from the wicked and cruel King Herod who tried to kill Jesus whose birth as Messiah was prophesized and heralded by a star that wise men followed from the Far East to Jerusalem seeking the baby born to be King of the Jews. Their arrival in Jerusalem was with a sufficient show of importance to stir the whole city.

King Herod was upset and distressed and all Jerusalem with him after hearing all this things and he planned to kill the child after finding out from the wise men upon their return where the child was. And so he said to them to go find out diligently where the child was and to bring him word so he too might go and worship the child.

But when the wise men didn't return having been warned in a dream not to do so and they departed into their own country by another route or way. King Herod was furious when he found out he had been tricked and gave orders to kill all the

boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity, who were 2 years and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the wise men. But an Angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said to him, 'Get up and take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt and stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him'. So Joseph got up and took the child and his mother and during the night they left for Egypt.

So was the child Jesus saved from wicked King Herod who killed all the children of Bethlehem as he had ordered, all except the child Jesus.

17. THE DEMONIAK OF GADARA



MARK 5:1-20.

This is the instance of Christ casting out or dispossessing the strong man armed, and disposing of him as he pleased, to show that He was stronger any day than he, satan. Jesus had crossed over from the other side into the country or region of Gadarenes and when he came out of the ship, immediately there met him a most miserable man who was possessed by an unclean spirit. The devil had such possession of him to the effect that he was not only raving mad, but a raging frenzy, and his condition seems to be the worst of any of the possessed person or people that were delivered by Christ during His ministry on the earth. He {the demoniac} had his dwelling among the tombs, among the graves of dead people. These tombs were out from the cities and in desolate places. He was

very strong and ungovernable such that no one could bind him, not even with chains and fetters, both for his own good and for the safety of others. He was a terror to himself and to all about him and this wretched creature was night and day in the mountains and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. And when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him {for even the devil in this poor creature was forced to tremble before Christ}. And he cried with a loud voice, and said, "what have I to do with you. Jesus thou son of the Most High God? By all that is sacred do not torment me." And Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" And he answered; my name is Legion, for we are many. {A legion was a Roman army unit of 6000 men} And he pleaded with Jesus to cast them out into the swine feeding nearby numbering about two thousand and Jesus gave them leave and the evil spirits left and entered into the swine and the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep bank into the lake and drowned. Then those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people came to see Jesus and they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind at the feet of Jesus; and they were afraid. And those who had witnessed it told the people what had happened to the demon possessed man and told about the pigs as well. Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region. As Jesus was getting into the boat to leave the man who had been demon possessed but now delivered begged to go with him, but Jesus told him to go home to his friends and family and tell them what great things the Lord had done for him. And so the man in a transport of joy, proclaimed, all the country over, what great things Jesus had done for him.

18. THE THIEF ON THE CROSS.



MATT 27:38 & 44 / LUKE 23:39-43

Two thieves' were crucified together with Jesus, one on his left and one on his right side. One of the robbers or criminal who hung there with Jesus hurled insults at him saying, "Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!" But the other criminal rebuked him saying, "don't you fear God! Even when you have been sentenced to die? We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn't done anything wrong". Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom".

Jesus answered him, "I assure you, today, you will be with me in Paradise.

This man was on the brink or point of death, and he turned to Christ for forgiveness, and Christ accepted him. Even in his misery, Jesus had mercy on this criminal who decides to believe in Him. And even though he only repented at the last moment possible, he received deliverance and followed Jesus into Glory.

19. PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON.



ACTS 12:1-18.

King Herod began to persecute the church, and so he had James, the Brother of John put to death by the sword {His head was cut off}. And when Herod saw that this pleased the Jewish people, he had Peter also arrested during the festival of the Unleavened bread and put in jail, and he was guarded by four groups or squads of four soldiers each..Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover. But the church was earnestly praying to God for him.

The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains and there were guards on duty at the prison gate.

Suddenly an Angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell.

He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up! He said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists. Then the Angel said to him, ' Put on your clothes and sandals'".

And Peter did so. ' Wrap your cloak around you and follow me' ",the Angel told him. Peter followed him out of the prison, not knowing, however, if what the Angel was doing was real; he thought he was seeing a vision.They went past the first guard and then the second, and came at last to the Iron Gate leading into the city. The gate opened for them by itself, and they went out. They walked down a street and suddenly the Angel left Peter.The Peter realized what had happened to him, and said, ' now I know that it is really true! The Lord sent his Angel to rescue me from Herod's power and from everything the Jewish people expected to happen. He then went to the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying. A servant girl named Rhoda came to answer the door and when she realized it was Peter she was so excited or overjoyed she run back without opening and exclaimed, "Peter is at the door"! You are out of your mind they answered but she kept insisting and Peter meanwhile kept knocking and so they opened the door at last and when they saw him they were amazed, then he explained to them how the Lord had brought him out of prison. Tell this to James and the rest of the believers, he said. Then he left for another place

20. PAUL AND SILAS.



ACTS 16: 20-40.

Paul and Silas arrived in Philippi and one day on their way to the place of prayer, they were met by a slave girl who had an evil spirit that made her to predict the future and made her owners a lot of money.

Now this girl followed Paul, Silas etc and shouting that “these men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved”. She kept this up for many days and Paul became so upset and grieved, that he turned round and commanded the spirit to come out of the girl. The owners realizing that their hope of making money was gone dragged Paul and Silas to face the authorities and after they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. So upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet between heavy blocks of wood. But at about midnight, as Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them, there was suddenly a violent earthquake, which shook the prison to its foundations. At once all the prison doors opened, and the chains fell off the prisoners. The jailer woke up and when he saw the prison doors open, he thought that the prisoners had escaped and so he pulled out his sword and was about to kill himself. But Paul shouted at the top of his voice, ‘ don’t harm yourself! We are all here!’ .The jailer called for a light, rushed in and fell trembling at the feet of Paul and Silas.

Then he led them out and asked, ”Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”” Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved-you and your family. Then they preached

the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in the house. And at that very hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds, and he and all his family were baptized at once. Then he took Paul and Silas up into his house and gave them some food to eat. He and his family were filled with joy, because they now believed in God. The next day, when the officials heard that they were Roman Citizens, they were afraid and so they went and apologized to them, then they led them out of the prison and ask them to leave the city. Paul and Silas left the prison and went to Lydia's house. There they met the believers, spoke words of encouragement to them, and left.



THE END