

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The nation of Israel was in trouble. They were living as slaves in the land of Egypt—mistreated, abused, overworked—and there seemed to be no end in sight. How could there be? They weren't strong enough to free themselves from the Egyptians who oppressed them, and the Egyptians were not about to lose their labor force by voluntarily setting Israel free. The circumstances looked very bleak.

Many in Israel were probably thinking along those very same lines as they wasted away in their bondage. But do you see what they were missing? They had properly evaluated who they were—a nation not strong enough to force their way to freedom. They had also properly evaluated who the Egyptians were—a nation too oppressive to grant them their freedom. But what they had forgotten to properly evaluate was who their Lord was.

And so, the Lord reminded them. God also said to Moses, "I am the LORD. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them. I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, where they lived as aliens. Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the Israelites, whom the Egyptians are enslaving, and I have remembered my covenant. 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. 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. 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. I am the LORD.'" Exodus 6:2-8

In this section of Scripture, the Lord is speaking to Israel's leader, Moses. The Lord's words had nothing to do with who Israel was. Nor did it have anything to do with who Egypt was.

Instead, the Lord's speech centered around who he was: "I am the LORD." In fact, barely a sentence goes by in the Lord's words that doesn't start with the pronoun "I."

"I am the LORD..." "I will bring you out..." "I will free you..." "I will redeem you..." "I will take you as my own people..." "I will be your God...". The list of "I's goes on and on.

And, sure enough, a quick glance through Israel's history shows us that the Lord did, indeed, keep all of those promises that he made to Israel. He brought Israel out of Egypt, even in spite of Israel's weakness. He freed Israel from their slavery, even in spite of Egypt's oppression. He did all of these things because he is the LORD! And when the Lord makes a promise, the Lord keeps it!

Friends, keep these words in mind as you evaluate the circumstances surrounding you in your own life. The Lord is always present. That means you need never worry or doubt or despair or fear, because the Lord has made you promises—promises to provide for you and protect you; promises to guard you and keep you; promises to be with you and bless you. And when the Lord makes a promise, the Lord keeps it!

Prayer: *Dear God, you have made yourself known to us as our Savior and our Lord. Remind us of who you are daily, that we may always find our comfort and our strength in you. Amen.*

(WELS E-Devotion, adapted)

...See you in worship.

Keep looking up because the Lord is always looking down – Psalm 121

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