

## God's Revelation of Himself in Names: Yahweh-Rophe—The LORD Your Healer

(Exodus 15:22-27)

### INTRODUCTION:

1. Some of our most enlightening knowledge of God's nature comes from God's revelation of himself through His names and the situations in which He does so. So, today I want to return to that study.
2. The name I want us to consider today is an important one because our world is sick and broken.
  - A. The vast and growing number of hospitals, clinics, counseling centers, and psychiatric drug use speak of the sickness, pain, sorrow, and emptiness so prevalent in our world.
  - B. This is why it is such *good news* to be able to talk about our God who has revealed Himself as **Yahweh-Rophe, the LORD your healer**.
    - i. We all need to be healed, whether it be because of past or present anguish, because of situations of life beyond our control, because our bodies are failing and broken, or because of uncertainty about their future, or because of sin.
    - ii. Whatever the case, the need for healing in our lives is real and deep.
3. So, I am happy to talk to you about God who has revealed Himself as Yahweh Rophe, the LORD who is your healer, your cure, your restorer, the One who can make you whole.

### BODY:

#### **I. Context/situation of God's revealing Himself as Yahweh Rophe (Exodus 14-15):**

- A. Soon after being freed from Egyptian bondage God led Israel to the shores of the Red Sea that blocked their way going forward while Pharaoh pursued them from behind.
  1. This was God's plan to bring honor to Himself by defeating Pharaoh and causing the Egyptians to know that He is God.
  2. But instead of waiting for God's deliverance, Israel *feared, cried out to God, and complained* at Moses for leading them out of Egypt to die in the wilderness!
    - a. Moses encouraged Israel to trust God and God told him to *raise his hand and staff over the sea* which caused the waters to part and allowed Israel to cross over on dry land.
    - b. When the Egyptians tried to follow, Moses repeated that process and the waters came down, the Egyptians died, and Israel was saved (Ex. 14:30-31 – "Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore.<sup>31</sup> When Israel **saw the great power** which the LORD had used against the Egyptians, the people **feared the LORD**, and they **believed in the LORD and in His servant Moses.**").
  3. God's salvation caused Israel to enjoy an emotional and spiritual high and sang a song of praise and faith (Ex. 15:1-2, 11-13 – "I will sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted; The horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea.<sup>2</sup> "The LORD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; This is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will extol Him...<sup>11</sup> "Who is like You among the gods, O LORD? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in praises, working wonders?<sup>12</sup> "You stretched out Your right hand, the earth swallowed them.<sup>13</sup> "In Your lovingkindness You have led the people whom You have redeemed; in Your strength You have guided them to Your holy habitation.").
- B. Just three days later, however, Israel again faced the problem of **water** at **Marah** (Exodus 15:22-25a – "Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went **three days** in the wilderness and **found no water**.<sup>23</sup> When they came to Marah, they **could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter**; therefore it was **named Marah**.<sup>24</sup> So the people **grumbled** at Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?"<sup>25</sup> Then he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree; and he threw it into the waters, and the waters became sweet...").
  1. In three days Israel went from fearing death from too much water to fearing death from too little water.
  2. Because Marah's waters were *bitter* and undrinkable, they did what we so naturally do when things are not as we think they should be—*they grumbled!*

- a. This bitter water **dashed the hopes** of those who had seen the plagues as well as the Red Sea being parted just three days earlier! This was because they **forgot who God is**.
- 3. Again, Moses **looked to God** and was given a solution of **throwing a tree into the waters** that caused the waters to become sweet!
  - a. That solution is completely beyond us—it makes no sense to us.
  - b. God sees problems and their solutions differently than we do, which is why we need to think of Him first before we allow ourselves to be defeated!

## II. God Reveals His name at *Marah*—the *LORD your healer*

- A. Text (Exodus 15:25b-26 – “**There** [at Marah] He made for them a statute and regulation, and there He tested them.<sup>26</sup> And He said, “If you will give earnest heed to the voice of the LORD your God, and do what is right in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for **I, the LORD, am your healer.**”).
- B. Why did God reveal Himself as the *healer* at **Marah**?
  - 1. Lack of clean water there meant “*marah*,” or “bitterness,” for Israel.
    - a. That is hard for us to understand because we live in America where clean water is readily available, allowing us to live healthier lives.
    - b. At Marah Israel did not find clean water. It was *bitter*, which means it was polluted, diseased, or bacterially infested, and would make them *sick* or even *kill* them.
    - c. So, this place became known as “Marah,” or “**bitterness**”—a place of *want* and *uncertainty* resulting in fear and desperation—*because they lacked faith!*
    - d. A lack of faith in God causes our lives to become bitter!
  - 2. Purifying the waters at Marah showed Israel that the *sickness* and *death* they had faced (bitterness), along with all those troubling emotions, were now taken away *by Him*.
- C. God revealing his name as **Yahweh Rophe** at Marah showed that **people cannot live without the LORD’s healing** (Exodus 15:25b-26 – “There He made for them a **statute** and **regulation**, and there He **tested** them.<sup>26</sup> And He said, “If you will give earnest heed to the voice of the LORD your God, and do what is right in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, **I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for I, the LORD, am your healer.**”).
  - 1. This did not mean that Israel then or His people today would never face disease or illness.
    - a. God revealed various laws and procedures addressing how the Israelites were to deal with illness, disease, and death.
    - b. Yet, many of God’s statutes and commandments that were focused on “spiritual cleanness” did have medical benefits for Israel.
      - i. God commanded the Israelites to wash their hands, body, and clothes after coming in contact with disease, bodily discharge, or a corpse, and to practice isolation and quarantine, all of which we now know can help prevent the spread of disease.
      - ii. Their dietary laws had certain health benefits as well.
      - iii. This was true while the world, including some of the world’s most intellectually advanced nations like Egypt, still practiced medicine based on **magic**, believing that potions and incantations were the answer for diseases, etc.
  - 2. The LORD as Israel’s **healer** meant that the **diseases He put on the Egyptians**, those who did not know, fear, or serve Him, would not be put upon His faithful and obedient people.
    - a. That is the statute and regulation mentioned in 15:25.
    - b. God reveals Himself as the **Healer** for all those who will give **earnest heed** to **His** voice, **do what is right** in **His** sight, **listen** to **His** commands, and **keep His statutes!**
      - i. God and His word are the answer to this world’s diseases—its guilt, hopelessness, emptiness, fractured relationships, and the bodily harm and disease often caused by living immorally in rebellion to God, etc.
      - ii. God is telling His people that His commands and statutes are not hindrances to a better life, but the one and only means of having a better life!

- iii. Why, because *sin* is the root of all our problems, of all that makes our lives sick and broken. So, not surprisingly, sin and sickness are often connected in God's word
  - 1) Isaiah 1:5 – "Where will you be **stricken again**, as you continue in your **rebellion**? The **whole head is sick** and the **whole heart is faint**."
  - 2) Psa. 103:2-3 – "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget none of His benefits; <sup>3</sup> who pardons all your **iniquities**, who heals all your **diseases**."
- c. How much better our lives would be if we could remember this connection...and we should remember it!

### III. We will be tested!

- A. Exodus 15:25b – "There [at Marah] He made for them a statute and regulation, and there He **tested** them."
- B. You must understand that **God tests His people!**
  - 1. Like our educators, God tested Israel to see if they listening in Egypt when His great power freed them and *just three days earlier* at the Red Sea when he **parted the waters**.
  - 2. We are going to be tested to see whether we are listening and learning that God is our deliverer, our life, our salvation!
- C. We must not despise the tests or give up (Heb. 10:35-38 – "Therefore, **do not throw away your confidence**, which has a great reward. <sup>36</sup> For you **have need of endurance**, so that when you have **done the will of God**, you may **receive what was promised**. <sup>37</sup> For yet in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and will not delay. <sup>38</sup> But **my righteous one shall live by faith**; and **if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him**.").
  - 1. We must *complete our life-long service* to God to receive the reward!
  - 2. Those who walk away from Jesus and His church are rejected. God has no pleasure in them!

### IV. Do not forget what follows!

- A. After God was showed He was Israel's **healer**, God brought Israel to Elim (Ex. 15:27 – "Then they came to Elim where there were **twelve springs of water** and **seventy date palms**, and they **camped there** beside the waters.>").
  - 1. After deliverance, the statutes and regulations, and the tests, what followed were great blessings in abundance, which is why we must trust him now!
- B. God as **Yahweh Rophe** means that when you trust and obey Him, He will provide more than enough for...
  - 1. Life and godliness here in this world (2 Pet. 1:2-3 – "Grace and peace be **multiplied** to you **in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord**; <sup>3</sup> seeing that His divine power has granted to us **everything pertaining to life and godliness**, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.>").
  - 2. Sustaining our hope of eternal life afterwards (John 14:1-3 – "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup> In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup> If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.>").

### V. Marah must come first!

- A. Israel had to **pass through Marah, through Bitterness**, before coming to Elim, the place of blessings in abundance.
- B. So must we.
  - 1. Eternal life is not received without tribulation (Acts 14:21-22 – "After they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, <sup>22</sup> **strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them** to continue in the faith, and saying, "**Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God**.").
  - 2. Difficulties and trials now—blessings and peace in heavenly bliss with God afterwards!
- C. Remember, however, that God revealed himself as **Yahweh Rophe—the LORD your healer**—after casting in a tree into the bitterness to make it sweet.

1. God is our healer because He has cast a **tree** shaped like a **cross** into the midst of our bitterness (1 Peter 2:21-25 – “For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, <sup>22</sup> who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; <sup>23</sup> and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; <sup>24</sup> and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. <sup>25</sup> For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.”).
2. But, to receive that healing and final reward, we must also take up our tree...our cross...and bear it until the end (Lk. 9:23-24 – “And He was saying to them all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.”).

#### CONCLUSION:

1. You may be in a bitter place right now, a place where you cannot see the way to healing.
2. Like Israel at Marah, you are being tested right now...whether you believe the Lord or not, look to Him for healing or not...whether you will obey Him or not...whether you will live in faith or not!
3. If you have not come to Jesus by *trusting* Him as your Lord and Savior and *submitting* to His will by *repenting* of your sins, *confessing* your faith in Him, and *being baptized into Christ* to be forgiven of your sins and to be raised to live a new life in obedience to His will, will you do so **now**?
4. Your choice will determine whether God will be **the LORD YOUR healer!**