

Title: "Know Your Enemy's Intent"

Text: Exodus 14:5-9

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Theme: Red Sea Rules

Cochise was a student at my High School. I think he was in my same grade. To my knowledge he had been in that grade for a few years. So it was that he was taller and stronger, by far.

Normally, we ran in different circles, except for a few classes where we were fellow students. Still, we were not friends, although, honestly, I did my best not to stir the pot.

One class we shared together was gym class, boys P.E. There in the locker room came the opportunity for a little extortion. Cochise decided that those he thought he could whip should pay him a little money for insurance. Those who did not buy in, were to meet him behind the school, after school.

I'm sure that he just wanted to share a Coke and talk about the benefit of security insurance. I'm sure that it was a congenial setting with facial features security in mind.

Know your enemy.

You know the story. Adam and Eve had an awesome setup. They had an awesome vacation setting. All they wanted to eat and a great wardrobe. At least, in the beginning, it didn't cost them much.

But there was this serpent creature that presented an alternative to what God had commanded.

I'm sure that the serpent really didn't mean to lead the young couple astray. I'm sure that he was just thinking about their best interests.

Know your enemy.

When Hitler was rising to power in Germany, he challenged the German people to experience the power and

prestige that a superior race should demonstrate. He was only thinking of what was best for the German people. You know, “Be the best you can be.” Take from those who have it and give to those who do not, or to those who should have it!

Exodus 14:5-9

When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his officials changed their minds about them and said, "What have we done? We have let the Israelites go and have lost their services!" [6] So he had his chariot made ready and took his army with him. [7] He took six hundred of the best chariots, along with all the other chariots of Egypt, with officers over all of them. [8] The Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, so that he pursued the Israelites, who were marching out boldly. [9] The Egyptians--all Pharaoh's horses and chariots, horsemen and troops--pursued the Israelites and overtook them as they camped by the sea near Pi Hahiroth, opposite Baal Zephon.

Imagine for a moment what it was like to be the king of Egypt.

The nation was one of the greatest in the known world. They were regarded as a people of refinement, education, wealth and military power. People spoke of Egypt with respect and maybe even a degree of fear.

Now, look what has happened.

1. Most families in the land have experienced the loss of their firstborn child.
2. Their gold, silver, and jewelry have been given to the departing Hebrews, to be given as a sacrifice to their Hebrew God.
3. The slaves, that had provided so much of the work force has been set free and are no gone.
4. They have experienced one natural disaster after another (ten plagues).
5. Instead of being the elite, they, as a nation, have been pillaged and raped.

*No longer are they the Kardashians of their day, but have become the Bruce Jenner's.

This does not set well with the Pharaoh. So he gathers his army and sets out to punish the Hebrews and regain his slaves.

Know your enemy's intent. Moses and his people were not wondering what was on Pharaoh's mind.

1. He wasn't coming for a farewell hug.
2. He wasn't bringing added presents.
3. He wasn't posturing for a news magazine.

Pharaoh wanted revenge. And that is why the people were afraid.

*Keep in mind that the Hebrew people had just recently survived the Passover event. You know the one where the death angel passed over their homes, and spared their children and livestock. They had survived unscathed while the Egyptians suffered loss and agony.

They watched as the great Pharaoh had yielded to the shepherd, Moses.

But now Pharaoh was about to strike back.

Know your enemy's intent, but focus on God.

What they were experiencing is the great problem of 2015!

Our enemy, like a prowling lion seeking to devour us, seeks to attack our communities, our churches, and our families.

1. Making laws that give approval for sinful actions and deviant behavior.

(Driven by sexual desires, selfish hopes, and a rejection of human rights and God-given boundaries.)

2. They threaten churches against speaking the truth by proposing a loss of tax exempt status. – And we allow it to happen.
 - a. There was a day when communities were socially and morally led by local churches.
 - b. Where are we today? We have come to the Red Sea and we fear the approaching swords of the enemy.
3. Our families are under duress.
 - a. Permission to discipline (spanking) is proclaimed as abuse.
 - b. To withhold permission to attend events, activities, and functions is seen as antiquated and portrayed as narrow thinking.

*Has there ever been a time like this? Sure there has. In western civilization it was modeled in ancient Greece and ancient Rome. Of course, it was previous to their destruction and downfall. But, why should we learn from them?

- c. It's not that we have more evil children but the parameters that would teach them moral boundaries, and a degree of self-discipline have been removed.
- d. Families that are doing it right are pictured as controlling, deviant, uneducated, and socially inept.

Know your enemy's intent, but focus on God.

Our hope for victory doesn't rest on looking back at the Egyptians but rather looking with anticipation into the face of the Red Sea.

The power for today still rests in the hands of the Almighty God.

Now, that doesn't mean that we shouldn't do anything or be involved in anything. In fact, we are called to be salt and light.

What do you think our God is asking us to do today?

A few thoughts that I have had include:

1. Seeking government office with the full intent of Christian influence. (Raising up our young people to infect government with a new integrity and moral compass)
2. As a pastor, with the support of our church, to begin to speak out specifically addressing the needs of our community and world, regardless of the threat of being taxed for proclaiming truth.
3. I am pleased to see that many of our families are very committed to the welfare and care of family life. The concept of spiritual influence is not lost on our children. But many in our community have no clue.
 - a. Children being raised in one parent homes.
 - b. Siblings that have known multiple parents due to multiple marriages and live-in partners.
 - c. Men, women, and children that have experienced abuse.
 - d. Our role is to promote an aggressive healthy family life without apology

Know our enemy's intent, but focus on God.

Think for a moment...who or what is your enemy today?
Focus on God and ask yourself, what is my next step?

“Lord, is it time for us to step into the sea?”