

Our God – A God of Wonders

When I first viewed the video we saw, I was struck by the simplicity of its presentation and then by the sheer power of what Adonai Elohim Tzivaot has wrought. When was the last time you thought of Adonai Elohim as a creator of wonder? I realize we know He is the Creator of the universe; we know He is the reason for our existence; He creates wonders! He creates awesome things we have never before beheld; we gaze upon them and we behold the fearsome power of our God and we are in awe of Him. We read in Psalm 111, *His work is full of majesty and splendor, and his righteousness continues forever. He has gained renown for his wonders.* (Psalm 111:3,4) Do we truly realize what it means for our magnificent Abba to create works *full of majesty and splendour*?

Abba, Father thank you for gathering us here today, to worship and adore you and be taught by you, through your servants. We are so grateful you have given us this opportunity to learn and grow, to draw closer to you and to become more intimate with you; may we come to the realization of how mighty, how powerful, how wonderful you are. In Your blessed Name we pray.

We are going to do something a little differently today. My portion of the message will be somewhat shorter than usual and, then, I will ask some of you who wish to share your encounters with our God of Wonder to come up to the front. Please take this time to listen to the words He has provided me and let the Holy Spirit lead you to share whatever He puts on your heart.

Charles Spurgeon, in one of his classic sermons, delivered in the early days of the 20th Century, claims God's wonders are not to be spectacular, momentary flashes of beauty and delight but are to be remembered for all times. He created

the universe with just a thought and He crafted you and me with the breath of a word. And, yet, I can't help but think we spend little time comprehending just how wonder-filled these creations are. Evolutionists would have us think all of this came to be as a result of an accident, a one-time happening of molecules bumping together, creating a chain reaction which resulted in you and me on this planet called earth, in a universe so vast we could never travel across it in a million, million years. And atheists claim our belief in God is preposterous.

Just how powerful is our Abba? We read a bit of that this morning, as our menorah was lit. Let's review for just a minute what power He has. First, as we read in Isaiah 11, He contains and maintains the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge. Everything that there is to know, from the simplest understanding to complexities beyond human comprehension, are His to command. And His wisdom is beyond compare - there is not a problem He is not able to solve and a relational issue He is incapable of resolving, merely through a whisper of love. Then we read He provides the Spirit of counsel and might. As the mighty counsellor, (Isaiah 9:5) our beloved Abba gives us direction and guidance more valuable and more certain than any human counsellor could ever conceive; this counsel is available to us, if we but ask. And He has the Spirit of might; such a power has never been seen in the hands of human beings, no matter how great we may perceive ourselves to be. Are we capable of creating a flower from the earth or bring life to the union of an egg and sperm? He even shares with us, as we learn in Jeremiah 32, *Look, I am ADONAI, the God of every living creature; is there anything too hard for me?* (Jeremiah 32:27) Frankly, I cannot think of a thing He cannot do or has not already done.

Do we remember the wonders He has created in our lives? How can we forget them? Each one of us has testimonies of His touching our hearts and our lives in ways we can never forget. You have stories of transformation – changes which took place within your heart and soul you could never have brought about by your own power. You have stories of real healing in your lives, miraculous times of cleansing and healing that even doctors would be hard pressed to explain.

However, Adonai's power is found in His wrath also. A dear friend of mine shared the following item obtained from the Russian Rabbi Chaim Zeckovi: At the beginning of WWII, when the truth about the fate of the Jewish people was discovered, and when there were still ways to save them, a few hundred rich Jews bought a ship in order to get their families on board and escape to America. But they needed visas, so they approached the American Ambassador in London. It was not difficult for him, but he utterly refused. The Jews, in order to save their families, went without the visas. When the Ambassador found out about it, he contacted Washington, advising them that a ship with illegal immigrants was approaching America. The Jews managed to overcome the horrors of war and reach America, but were not permitted into America. These unlucky people were ordered to turn around and return to burning Europe. All burnt in the death camps. When the tragedy was revealed, the Rabbi of London came to the American Ambassador and said: "Your deeds do not befit not only your post, but you are not fit to be called 'a human'. And now, since you caused hundreds of people's death, you and all your descendants' generations down from now on will be cursed!" The name of the American Ambassador was Joseph P. Kennedy Sr. As we have seen, each generation of the Kennedy family from then until today has

suffered significant loss. When anyone touches the apple of God's eye, there are consequences to be paid, and it is through His awesome power they will be paid. We know this for both Scripture and History clearly lay out for us how He causes consequences to fall upon those who betray Him.

Case in point is Israel itself, in the 8th. Century, BCE. As we read in 2 Kings 17: *In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Ashur captured Shomron. He carried Isra'el away captive to Ashur, resettling them in Halach, in Havor on the Gozan River and in the cities of the Medes. This came about because the people of Isra'el had sinned against ADONAI their God, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, out from under the domination of Pharaoh king of Egypt. (2 Kings 17:6,7)* And why did the God of Israel display His wrath on His chosen people? We discover in verse 8, *They feared other gods and lived by the customs of the nations that ADONAI had expelled ahead of the people of Isra'el and by those of the kings of Isra'el. (2 Kings 17:7,8)* We know Adonai Elohim Tzivaot is a jealous God, who has a good deal of patience for those who turn away from Him for a moment, but, for those who turn their backs on Him, even after He has warned them of the consequences, his patience wears thin.

He has also shown this degree of anger to the nations who have attacked and damaged Israel, without provocation. The Persian empire had the greatest repository of known philosophy, mathematics, science and poetry. Indeed some of the most important works of the ancient world came from the Persians. However, after the Jews were allowed to leave their captors in Susa, the decline of the Persian Empire began. Between 464 and 330 BCE, the empire began to fall apart. Loose controls and internal revolts led to its destruction, until it was over-

taken by the Arab nations around it. From the ashes of the conquered Persian Empire emerged Islam and the current nation of Iran.

The Romans suffered a similar fate, when, shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem and the forced exile of its people, Rome collapsed or, rather, imploded due, in part, to its lack of ethical standards and its licentious focus on human pleasure but more so to the promise of Adonai's hand of destruction on any nation which caused suffering to His people. This is made very clear in Isaiah 60: *For the nation or kingdom that won't serve you will perish; yes, those nations will be utterly destroyed.* And indeed, every nation that has harmed the Nation Israel has been utterly destroyed or, at the least, devastated, including Moab, Amalek, Ammon, just to name a few.

Rather than becoming too entangled within God's wrath, let's focus instead on God's awesome grace. We know we are saved by grace through faith; this truth has been well established. We also know grace is a free gift from Adonai Elohim, our Abba, and does not require anything from us. We do not have to work for His grace. All that He wants from us is our love, demonstrated by our obedience to His life instructions. This comes to us through Adonai Yeshua's own words, in John 14: *If you love me, you will keep my commands.* (John 14:15) How important is it for us to know we do not have to earn His love? All-too-often, human relationships are conditional. I know of many families in which love is conditional on the works performed by children. This is not spoken openly but demonstrated clearly. Children are not hugged or kissed by their parents unless they have done something well; there is no such thing as spontaneous affection displayed in these families.

Our great God is not like that. He does not require us to please Him, before He displays His love for us. He loves us unconditionally because of whom He is, not what we have done. How awesome is that!

Now, here is where you have an opportunity to share with us your encounters with our awesome Abba. I ask you to come to the front and speak clearly, knowing others who are not here today may be able to understand what you are sharing. I also ask you to be as brief as possible, in order we allow all those who wish to share an opportunity.

Closing Remarks

How can we not perceive our God as the epitome of Goodness? Listening to these testimonies fills me with a sense of wonder and awe. Our Abba is magnificent and almighty in His ways. Let us thank Him for His love and Goodness.

Abba, Father, how wonderful you are; You are the One we cling to and love beyond anything or anyone else we do or will know . . .