

Series: Exodus

Title: Procession Ended, Folly Manifest

Text: Exodus 8: 16-19

Date: October 22, 2017

Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Exodus 8: 16: And the LORD said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt. 17: And they did so; for Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and smote the dust of the earth, and it became lice in man, and in beast; all the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt. 18: And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not: so there were lice upon man, and upon beast. 19: Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.

Pharaoh and his magicians and the Egyptians who followed them represent the devil, his preachers and his people.

Proposition: The good news we see here is that when God has accomplished his purpose false preachers and false brethren then God stops them from proceeding further and exposes their folly to his people so that none of his elect shall be deceived.

2 Timothy 3: 8: Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. 9: But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all *men*, as theirs also was.

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A WARNING TO ALL

Exodus 8: 16: And the LORD said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.

You might ask, "Where is the warning?" It is in the fact that *this time* God gave no warning. Before this and after this, God sent Moses with the word of the LORD and warned Pharaoh of the plague that was coming if he did not bow and obey the word of the LORD.

Unbelievers who are yet under the gospel of God's grace have this going for you, at least God is still sending you the warning to repent and believe on Christ. But God says,

Proverbs 29:1: He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

Zechariah 7: 11...they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. 12: Yea, they made their hearts *as* an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts. 13: Therefore it is come to pass, *that* as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the LORD of hosts:...

This would be the end of all sinners were it not for the sovereign, irresistible grace of God. He gives his people a willing heart in the new birth to believe on Christ. Someone will say, "*If I cannot believe except*

God has mercy on me, why then does God find fault? For who has resisted his will?" Paul answered that question.

Romans 9: 17: For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. 18: Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he hardeneth. 19: Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? 20: Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou made me thus? 21: Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

By leaving some men to themselves in sin, God makes his wrath and power known to those he saves.

Romans 9: 22: *What* if God, willing to shew *his* wrath, and to make his power known, endured [take out the words: *with much longsuffering*] the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: 23: And that [*with much longsuffering*] he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, 24: Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

By enduring the reprobate and showing much longsuffering to his elect, God makes us behold that we, too, would have perished except by God's grace. We see the riches of his glory in that he freely made us vessels of mercy. We see the riches of his glory in that he sent his only begotten Son afore and prepared us for glory by Christ's blood then called us to faith in Christ. So brethren, as you behold men perishing under false preachers, do not exalt yourself. We are no different by nature. God alone made the difference by his power and grace.

THE CURSE OF REJECTING CHRIST

Exodus 8: 17:...for Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and smote the dust of the earth, and it became lice in man, and in beast; all the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt.

All who reject Christ are left under the curse of the law. The dust being smitten represents the curse. And lice coming from the dust represents sin coming from our cursed, dusty, flesh. When God pronounced the curse upon Adam and his offspring for rejecting God, God said, "*Cursed is the ground for thy sake...dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return.*" (Gen 3: 17-19)

We all come into this world under the curse of the law because of Adam's transgression. (Rom 5: 12) The good news is Christ afore prepared a people for glory.

Galatians 3: 13: Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:

When God laid on Christ the iniquity of all his elect, God's rod of justice smote Christ instead of his people. God honored his holy law by making Christ a curse for his people So "*The chastisement of our peace was upon him and with his stripes we are healed.*" (Is 53: 5)

Yet, all who will not believe on Christ remain under the curse until the day they themselves shall be smitten with that same rod of justice.

Proverbs 3:33: The curse of the LORD is in the house of the wicked:...

Left under the curse, like the lice coming from the dust upon everything in Egypt, our sin corrupts our religion and everything we touch so that God will not accept us. The Egyptians vain religion required their priests and the beasts they offered be clean. But the lice defiled them. So their entire religion was shut down. So Pharaoh was left without a priest and without an offering and *that is the curse of the LORD in the house of the wicked.*

Christ is the only High Priest and Offering that purges the believer of our sins. But reject Christ and there is no more High Priest and no more offering to save you, you are left under the curse of the law and shall be smitten by it!

Hebrews 10: 26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, [if we reject the truth] there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28: He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith [the Son of God] was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 31: *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

THE FINGER OF GOD

Exodus 8: 18: And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not: so there were lice upon man, and upon beast. 19: Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.

How did Christ cast out devils?

Luke 11: 20: But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

With his finger, Christ stopped Jannes and Jambres and manifest their folly to his people.

2 Timothy 3: 8: Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. 9: But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all *men*, as theirs also was.

Why did Christ not stop them before? Because God uses false preachers to harden the heart of the reprobate against the truth. God allowed satan to give these magicians power to imitate God's true preachers. It made Pharaoh and the Egyptians think these men were God's true messengers and Moses and Aaron were false preachers. By this God hardened their hearts more against God, against his true preachers and against his true gospel.

Yet, God will not allow false preachers to deceive his elect. Their folly shall be manifest to all his elect. That is what he did here.

Psalm 76: 10: Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.

The finger of God not only stopped these men but also made them declare the truth—*Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God.* Why? So that out of their own mouth they condemned themselves. The false preacher’s condemnation will be by the very words he preached.

Luke 19: 22: Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant.

Matthew 12:37: For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

Since God uses the false preacher to harden men’s hearts, they will not believe even when they hear the truth—*Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God: and Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.*

False brethren agree with each other when they have a common enemy: Pharisees, Sadducees, Nicolaitans, Jews, Gentiles all joined together to crucify Christ. But false brethren reject each other when the other no longer serves their wicked purpose just as Pharaoh rejected his own counselors. And that, too, is God working his will—all of this came to pass “*as the LORD had said.*”

These same three things were done by God concerning Christ.

One, God used false religionists to accomplish his purpose of putting Christ on the cross.

Acts 5: 27: For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, 28: For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

Two, out of their own mouths Christ’s enemies condemned themselves when they unintentionally spoke the truth of Substitution.

Mark 15:31: Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save.

Three, those who were in agreement to crucify Christ later rejected each other and were hardened in their vain religious works—*as the Lord had said.*

REMEMBER

This gospel is the warning to repent and believe on Christ. Heed the gospel. But if any man rejects Christ he remains under the curse and shall be smitten by the same rod of justice.

Yet, in all this, God is using even the false preacher and his followers to serve God’s purpose. He is manifesting those that he has approved and hardening the hearts of those who refuse to bow the knee to Christ. God will see to it that Jannes and Jambres shall proceed no further. Their folly shall be manifest—not to them—but to God’s people. God will not allow his people to be deceived.

Matthew 24: 24: For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

Knowing these things, we should give utmost diligence to make sure what we hear preached and what we promote is true:

1 John 4: 1: Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2: Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

Understand, a man may say many true things and some may appear to preach Christ in truth. But he ceased preaching Christ when he began using the gospel to convince of a doctrine he makes necessary for salvation because the focus ceased being Christ. Therefore, before God and before those God gives spiritual discernment, he ceased preaching Christ. It is the spirit of anti-christ denying that the Jesus is the Son of God come in the flesh. God manifests those he has approved because we discern the false preachers and flee from them. This is by the grace of God because Christ will not allow those he redeemed by his blood to be deceived by such!

Amen!