

Series: Exodus

Title: The LORD Sought to Kill Moses!

Text: Ex 4: 24-26

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Moses was a child of God. God had given him faith to rest in Christ his Surety and Redeemer. God had set Moses apart, called and sent him to Egypt to be God's ambassador. As Moses went on his way, he checked into an inn so that he and his family could rest.

Exodus 4: 24: And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the LORD met him, and sought to kill him.

The LORD brought the sentence of death upon Moses: in his conscience and perhaps by some debilitating illness. The LORD made it clear to Moses that it was because Moses had not fulfilled his responsibility as head of his house so as to circumcise his son.

Exodus 4: 25: Then Zipporah [Moses' wife] took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at [Moses'] feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me.

We learn Zipporah had a temper. She was very angry at Moses. She despised circumcision. But her real problem was that she despised God, his Christ, his order and his command. But Moses understood and obeyed God.

Exodus 4: 26: So he let him go:

Moses repented and circumcised his son, God was pleased—*so he let Moses go.*

Exodus 4: 26...then she said, A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision.

We will see Moses continued to obey God even though Zipporah continued to be angry with him.

When a believer disobeys any known duty, our heavenly Father is displeased. His heavenly Father had done all for Moses in sovereign, free grace. So from a motive of gratitude, Moses was to obey God and mortify his flesh. His Father had quickened Moses and given him faith and life in Christ. Constrained by the love of Christ, Moses was to obey God as head of his house. God had honored Moses by calling him to be his ambassador to Egypt. Moses was to honor God by obeying him in circumcising his child.

Though we are complete in Christ so that no charge will ever be brought against one whom God justified, God our Father requires his child to obey him.

GOD CHASTENS HIS CHILD

Exodus 4: 24: And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the the LORD met him, and sought to kill him.

When a believer disobeys any known duty God will chasten his child. God did not seek to condemn Moses with everlasting condemnation. God will not condemn one for whom Christ died!

Romans 8: 1: *There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2: For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me

free from the law of sin and death. 3: For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

God will not condemn one of his elect because God sent his own Son to save his elect. God will not condemn one for whom Christ died because Christ took flesh like his brethren and represented us as our legal Head. Christ bore our sin and condemnation in our place and condemned our sin in his flesh. Christ died because Christ fulfilled the righteousness of the law for us and Christ is our Righteousness.

It would be unjust to charge us since Christ paid our sin-debt and made us righteous in him. So God will not lay charge to one for whom Christ died.

Romans 8: 33: Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth. 34: Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

God called us by free grace. So God will not repent and take back his gifts nor turn from calling his child—

Romans 11: 29: For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance.

God the Father brought the sentence of death only upon Moses' natural body so that Moses would not trust in his flesh but in God. The sentence of death must be upon everything about a believer's natural life. If Zipporah refused to circumcise her son, the Lord God was going to kill her husband. If Moses allowed his love for his wife, to prevent him from circumcising his son, the Lord was about to kill him. The sentence of death must be upon everything about our natural lives.

Zipporah is an instructive picture of the Church—elect children particularly. She was married and united to Moses, but their union could not be complete until she was reconciled to him by blood. He must be made "*a bloody husband*" to her. So it is with us. Though espoused, married, and united to Christ from eternity, we must be conformed to his death, and conformed to him in his death. That Paul's desire. He said,

Philippians 3:10: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.

Be sure to understand. Our relationship with Christ is founded upon blood, and the manifestation of the power of that relationship, necessarily, involves death to nature. So we must mortify our fleshly members which are on earth, take up the cross daily, and follow Christ. For the believer, who is compromising with his flesh, God made it clear to Moses that he must repent and obey God by doing what God had commanded. Repentance is God turning our heart from our wrong to do what God would have us do. God chastens his child in love to and always causes us to do so.

MOSES OFFENSE

Moses chief offense was that he had not fulfilled his responsibility as head of his house. As head he was to honor God before all in his house. He was to have rule of his house. He was to circumcise his son. Each of these things were given by God to glorify Christ who is the Head of his church, his bride.

As Head, Christ honored God by circumcising his people on the cross and in the heart by the Holy Spirit. As Head, Christ rules his house in love, even when his bride objects. Christ would not take no from us. He loved us to himself. He constrained our hearts by his love and grace to cast our care on him.

A believing husband honors Christ when the husband fulfills his responsibility as head of his house. We do not circumcise our children. Our duty is to have our house under the preaching of the gospel of Christ through which believers are circumcised in heart by the Holy Spirit. A husband rules his house: not as a strict, unmerciful, unforgiving tyrant nor as a pushover submitting to his wife as Moses had done but in love, grace, mercy and forgiveness as Christ rules us. Anything else is natural, dishonoring to Christ

Let me stress this point. Believers are not commanded to circumcise our children. We have no ordinance that is the new covenant version of circumcision. Circumcision does not typify baptism, as many teach.

As with all old testament ceremonies, circumcision typified Christ and his work.

Colossians 2: 11: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.

Also, circumcision typified regeneration by God the Holy Spirit.

Romans 2: 28:...neither *is that* circumcision which is outward in the flesh: 29...circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God.

The child at 8 days old was incapable of circumcising himself. It was by his father. This pictured our inability to put off the body of our sins which Christ did for us. It pictured our inability to circumcise our hearts which God the Holy Spirit does for us. When the child was circumcised he was brought under the covenant of works; when we are circumcised in heart, we are brought under the everlasting covenant of grace.

God gave Abraham “*the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had yet being uncircumcised.*” (Rom 4: 11) **The Holy Spirit in our hearts is the seal and earnest of the believer—**

Ephesians 1: 13:...after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14: Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

So our part in circumcising our children is to have them under the sound of the gospel of Christ.

WHY DISOBEDIENCE IS DISPLEASING TO GOD

Exodus 4: 25: Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast *it* at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband *art* thou to me.

Disobedience to God is displeasing because it indicated an idol has come between our hearts and Christ. For Moses, that idol was his wife, Zipporah. Moses disobeyed God by marrying Zipporah. Zipporah was a Midianite, the descendant of Ishmael, the son of the bondwoman. God says,

2 Corinthians 6:14: Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

The believer will always compromise with the unbeliever because the carnal heart is enmity against God as we see in Zipporah. So Moses displeased God rather Zipporah; he feared Zipporah more than God.

But God will not allow Moses to go preach his word until Moses is turned back to Christ alone. Imagine how it would affect Moses' ministry, if he was allowed to continue compromising with Zipporah. No man can serve God when he is more concerned about pleasing his wife or children or any loved one rather than pleasing God. This is why Christ said, "*He that loveth father or mother...son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.*" (Mt 10: 37) God's minister must be "*One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity.*" (1 Tim 3: 4) Again, ruling well is ruling in love and mercy and longsuffering and grace as is needed to rule God's house as Christ rules his house. So Moses must be made to repent, trust Christ and obey God in what he had not done.

RIGHTEOUS FRUIT

When God chastens his child he always produces righteous fruit.

Hebrews 12: 11: Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

After God chastened Moses it brought forth peaceable fruit of righteousness. Moses repented and obeyed God by taking the rule of his house. This is seen by Zipporah circumcising the child. So after Moses repented and obeyed God, "*Then God let him go.*"

Then God brought forth more peaceable fruit in Moses. Moses was immediately tested. Zipporah was still angry about having to circumcise her son, **Exodus 4: 26...then she said, A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision.**

We learn a lesson here concerning our depravity. A sinner can obey God outwardly but obedience is only true when God has circumcised the heart. So the fruit which God brought forth in Moses was that in faithfulness to God, in order to prevent any further distraction from God's work, Moses sent Zipporah and their two sons back to live with her father. He did not divorce her; he did not fail to provide for her. Moses sent her back until his work in Egypt was finished then he called for her. We see this in Exodus 18.

Exodus 18: 1: When Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father in law, heard of all that God had done for Moses, and for Israel his people; and that the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt. 2: Then Jethro, Moses' father in law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, **after he had sent her back**, 3: And her two sons;

What a picture! We hated God in enmity as we see in Zipporah. So God did not look to us to help him. Christ our Husband came into Egypt and accomplished our salvation himself. Then God our Father being satisfied with Christ, draws Christ's bride to Christ as Jethro brought Zipporah to Moses.

Also, after Moses repented and obeyed God then God brought forth this peaceable fruit, **Exodus 4: 27: And the LORD said to Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in the mount of God, and kissed him.** When God has brought us to repentance to trust Christ and obey him. God causes us to once again meet our Elder Brother, the High Priest of Israel, our Lord Jesus, who comes forth to meet us and kiss us with kisses of love.

OBEDIENCE TO GOD

So let us learn this. Obedience to Christ begins with faith in Christ trusting you are made righteous by his obedience alone. Faith is not being in the right church, it is not having a mother or father that believes, faith is believing on Christ yourself, rejoicing in the heart in Spirit and putting no confidence in the flesh. Obedience is following Christ in believer's baptism, partaking of his table, continuing under his gospel,

supporting it with our presence and our money. Obedience is adorning the doctrine of Christ in all things in our lives as we love our brethren. Obedience is letting nothing natural come between us and our Redeemer in whom we are complete.

As he causes us to behold that we are saved by God's free grace, by Christ's obedience on our behalf, constrained only by Christ's love for us his people shall be willing by Christ in the day of his power! Let us thank God that he chastens us and brings forth this peaceable fruit of righteousness. And let us obey our Lord Jesus Christ in all things.

Amen!