

Title: Sanctification by Christ the Lamb

Text: Exodus 13: 11-16

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Sanctification, according to scripture, is to be made holy by God the Father setting us apart in Christ in electing grace before the world was made (Jude 1), by God the Son perfecting us at the cross (Heb 10: 9-14) and by God the Holy Spirit washing us in regeneration, creating in us a holy heart (2 Thess 2: 13-14; 1 Pet 1:2). God personally leads us by the Spirit in the new spirit he has given us throughout the life of faith. (Gal 5: 12) Sanctification is not by us making ourselves holy by our works under the law in any regard. (Rom 11: 6; Eph 2: 9)

Last time, we saw that sanctification is of God through Christ. This is typified in the LORD sending Moses to do the sanctifying.

Exodus 13: 1: And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2: Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine.

The Passover lamb had already been offered. Now, Moses is sent forth to sanctify the firstborn. This typified how that Christ our Passover Lamb sanctified his people on the cross and rose again so that now Christ comes forth of the LORD to sanctify in heart, all those he sanctified by his blood. (Eph 1: 20-23; 1 Pet 5: 10; Php 1: 11)

Then we saw in verses 3-10 that sanctification is through the hearing of faith, the hearing of the gospel of Christ and not the hearing of works. Moses sanctified the firstborn by first preaching to the children of Israel, giving them the Passover feast and the feast of unleavened bread. By this they were constantly reminded that they were redeemed and sanctified by the hand of the LORD, apart from their works. This is a picture of the hearing of the gospel of Christ's works by which we are sanctified.

Galatians 3: 1: O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? 2: This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3: Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? 4: Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if *it be* yet in vain. 5: He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, *doeth he it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 6: Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. 7: Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. 8: And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

But the Lord also gave another picture of the hearing of faith by making them sanctify all the firstborn. This will be our text.

Exodus 13: 11: And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, as he sware unto thee and to thy fathers, and shall give it thee, 12: That thou shalt set apart unto the LORD all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males shall be the LORD'S. 13: And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem. 14: And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the LORD brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage: 15: And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the LORD slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem. 16: And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength of hand the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt.

This is another picture of the hearing of faith by which we are sanctified. This, too, constantly reminded the children of Israel that they were sanctified through the redemption of the Passover lamb.

Proposition: Like as the law of the firstborn constantly reminded them that they were sanctified through the redemption of the Passover lamb, we are constantly reminded by hearing the gospel that we are sanctified by the redemption of Christ our Passover Lamb.

ALL WHO ARE SANCTIFICATED BELONG TO GOD

Exodus 13: 11: And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, as he sware unto thee and to thy fathers, and shall give it thee, 12: That thou shalt set apart unto the LORD all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males shall be the LORD'S.

By this law of the firstborn they were constantly reminded that they and all they possess belonged to the LORD. God said that he sanctified all the firstborn to himself on the day he smote the firstborn in Egypt. Even the children of Israel's firstborn were smitten that day but they were smitten in a substitute, the Passover lamb.

Numbers 8:17: For all the firstborn of the children of Israel are mine, both man and beast: on the day that I smote every firstborn in the land of Egypt I sanctified them for myself.

Therefore, all the animals that God said were clean animals were to be set apart and offered to God because they belonged to God. The unclean animals were his too but we will see something next about that. But for the clean firstborn animals they were to be set apart for the Lord. The margin says the word “set apart” means “cause to pass over.” They were to be set apart and caused to pass through the fire then over to God as a burnt offering to thank the LORD.

The sacrifice passing through the fire to God is a picture of Christ passing through the fiery justice of God with all his people in him. Those true believers, born of the Holy Spirit, offered their firstborn clean animals as a burnt offering to thank the Lord, to acknowledge to the LORD, that in the day he smote the Passover lamb all their firstborn died in the substitute lamb and were sanctified and became his.

The true believer knew the picture in the ceremony. Those born of the Spirit and taught of God knew that, in ceremony and type, they died under the justice of God in that substitute lamb. True believers knew that the Passover lamb was a type of the coming Messiah, Christ our Passover. Christ said, “Abraham saw my day!” So by sacrificing their firstborn clean animals to God they acknowledged just what God declared “*on the day that I smote every firstborn in the land of Egypt I sanctified them for myself; they are mine.*”

Remember, the firstborn are like the firstfruits. What the firstborn is all the rest are. The firstborn represents all God’s elect. Christ is the Firstborn and all his people are firstborn sons in him.

Now, you and I who are firstborn sons in Christ the Firstborn do not have to offer up our firstborn because we are the firstborn typified here. We are the church of the firstborn of whom Christ is the Firstborn among many brethren. (Heb 12: 23; Rom 8: 29)

Christ himself is truly *the first and only* to open the womb because he was born of a virgin. The womb is opened at conception, not at birth. But Christ opened the womb of a virgin at his birth. When he was offered as the firstborn son of Mary, Christ fulfilled this law and was the first and only one to do it.

Luke 2:22: And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; 23: (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)

Christ is the only one to fulfill this law in perfection. It shows he alone fulfills all the law for his people. All God’s elect fulfilled this very law, and all the law, perfectly in Christ when he established it.

Therefore, we are God’s firstborn, the church of the firstborn, in Christ the Firstborn. God says, “*On the day that I smote every firstborn [elect child, in Christ my FIRSTBORN] I sanctified [every firstborn elect child] for myself.*” And as they were reminded of this through offering up their firstborn clean animals, we are reminded as we hear the gospel of Christ preached.

Brethren, since we are holy by the blood of Christ, by sanctification of the Spirit, God will now receive us. Therefore, constrained by his love, we do not present our firstborn clean animals but what do we present? How do we thank God and acknowledge that all we are and all we have belongs to God?

Romans 12: 1: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

Brethren, by the blood of Christ, we belong to God. All that we are and all that we possess belongs to God.

1 Corinthians 6: 19: What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20: For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.

See, we are not under the law but under grace. Christ has given us this light and easy yoke: to live unto him to glorify him in our body and our spirit.

SANCTIFICATION BY THE LAMB’S REDEMPTION

Exodus 13: 13: And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem.

They were reminded that the reason they were sanctified and clean is by the clean lamb redeeming them who were unclean. This was pictured in the clean, firstborn lamb redeeming the unclean, firstborn ass.

An ass is a wild, stubborn, unclean animal that will not obey. That is you and I by nature

Job 11:12: For vain man would be wise, though man be born *like* a wild ass’s colt.

The wild ass will not bear the yoke. So none of God’s elect will ever bow to the yoke of Christ, except the Son of God break him. Man by nature is like “*a wild ass used to the wilderness, that snuffeth up wind at her pleasure*” (Jer 2:24; Job 39:5).

Be sure to understand, God would not receive the unclean ass unless it be sanctified and made clean. They could set it apart themselves, put it in the field with the lambs, put an outward covering of lamb's wool on it to make it look like a lamb and call it sanctified. But that would not make it clean and sanctified? Neither can a sinner make himself clean and holy to God for God's use by anything he or other men do. Religion tries to separate men, put a fake covering of rules and regulations on them and call that sanctification. Not so!

Job 9:30: If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean; 31: Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me."

Sanctification is entirely of the Lord apart from our works. In order to be cleaned and sanctified the unclean ass had to be redeemed by a clean lamb dying in its place or else God said break its neck. God's holiness demands that all us unclean asses must die ourselves under God's justice OR by God's grace, be made holy and perfect unto God, by Christ, the Holy Lamb of God, redeeming us by laying down his life in our place.

Be sure to get what God declares by this type: his people are *perfected in sanctification*—made perfectly holy, sanctified unto God—*by the blood of Christ by which we are also redeemed and justified*.

Hebrews 10: 9: Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. 10: By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*...14: For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Men are always accusing us of confounding sanctification and justification. God declares in this type and in Hebrews 10: 9-14 that the sanctification of his people is by Christ's one offering by which he justified us of our sins and made us righteous in him. By his one offering Christ sanctified us. By his one offering Christ perfected forever them that are sanctified.

Then God showed the result of this in their firstborn sons. They had to pay the redemption price to redeem their firstborn sons. Like as they paid the redemption price to buy their firstborn sons, now, by the blood of Christ, he has bought his people to himself. He has redeemed his people from the curse of the law to himself. So all God's elect are God's purchased possession, his holy, firstborn sons. The apostle Peter understand that our holiness was by the precious blood of Christ by which we are redeemed from the curse of the law unto God as his purchased possession.

1 Peter 1: 15: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; 16: Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy...18: Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as silver and gold*, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; 19: But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

Amazing grace! By Christ's blood, all those born of God are God's elect—sanctified, perfected forever. So that we are God's own purchased possession, his firstborn sons. By this gospel, he keeps us living in holiness unto Christ and loving our brethren.

1 Peter 1: 22: Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently*: 23: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever...25:...And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

Since our flesh is grass and we are born-again and made holy by the gospel of Christ, Peter says,

1 Peter 2: 1: Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2: As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: 3: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord *is* gracious.

SANCTIFIED THROUGH THE HEARING OF FAITH

Exodus 13: 14 And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the LORD brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage: 15: And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the LORD slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem. 16: And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes, for by strength of hand the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt.

The same as they were reminded and kept looking to their Sanctifier each time they observed this law of the firstborn, so we are reminded and kept looking to Christ alone through the preaching of the gospel.

And it is by this gospel that we are constrained to do all to Christ's glory—*"And it shall be for a token upon thine hand."*

1 Corinthians 10: 31: Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

Colossians 3:17: And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him...23: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

Through hearing the works of Christ by which we are made righteous and holy we are kept looking only to Christ—“*and for frontlets between thine eyes*”

Hebrews 12: 1...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2: Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Through hearing of Christ's faithfulness we are kept giving him all the praise and glory—“*for by strength of hand the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt.*”

1 Corinthians 1: 31: As it is written, he that glorieth let him glory in the LORD.

Amen!