

Series: Exodus

Title: Declaring the End from the Beginning

Text: Exodus 3: 16-22

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**Exodus 3: 16: Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them.**

Christ sent Moses with the word. Moses delivered the word to the elders. The elders delivered the word to their tribes. In like manner, in our day, God sends Christ. Christ gives the word to his elders (pastors). His elders give the word to the churches they pastor.

Here we have Christ “Declaring the End from the Beginning.”

In this passage we will see what the message is that Christ gives to his preachers to preach. Then we see the outcome Christ promises to produce through his word. Next, we will see what Christ promises the enemy will do and what Christ will do to the enemy. Last, we will see how Christ promise to provide our needs.

In this passage the theme is that every promise Christ has made to us, he shall bring to pass and none shall stop him from doing so.

**THE MESSAGE**

**Exodus 3: 16: Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt: 17: And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.**

Here we see the message Christ gives us to proclaim. In verses 6-9 we find the Lord declaring the same thing to Moses that he is here sending Moses to declare in verses 16-17. The Lord does not send us forth to declare something novel. He sends us to declare the same gospel by which he revealed himself unto us.

The message is the name of the LORD—“*say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers.*” He is the LORD God who saves by covenant grace. In covenant grace, he promises to us what he will do, he fulfills all his promises himself and he does it for his chosen people all by free grace.

Christ sends us forth to declare him to be THE God—“*the God of Abraham.*” Christ Jesus is the fullness of the godhead bodily. (Col 2: 9) He is THE God and there is no other. God our Savior is the all-powerful, all-knowing, ever-present, self-existing, self-sustaining God. He does as he will and none can stay his hand. (Dan 4: 35)

As we are sent to declare his name we declare him to be the LORD God of the living—“*the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob.*” He was their God, past tense, when they dwelt alive on earth. God was their God when he made them spiritually alive by his grace in regeneration. He is their God, present tense, because he gave them life in glory. And God will be the God of his people forever because the life he gives is eternal life. (Mt 22: 32)

God sends us forth to declare him the God who is able to call his people by divine revelation—“*the God...appeared unto me.*” God does not appear unto us in person by sight as he did unto Moses. But he appears to us by divine revelation through God-given faith in the face of Christ Jesus our Lord, his Son. Brethren, each time I stand here, I try to declare to you that which God has revealed to me about himself. Christ is my message! I preach what I know by divine revelation; this same name!

The message Christ sends us to declare is the message of God’s works—“*saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt.*” God visited his people in Christ. He saw our bondage: our guilt under the law and our sin-nature depraved. And God in Christ came to deliver his people and accomplished it—“*And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt...unto a land flowing with milk and honey.*” Christ delivered his people out of the guilt of the law into Christ in whom we are made the righteousness of God. He delivered us out of the bondage of our sin-nature into the liberty of newness of spirit. Soon he shall deliver us out of this cursed world into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

2 Corinthians 5: 19: To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

This is the message he has committed unto us. We are sent to declare the message of comfort which is the sure and certain salvation by our triune God in Christ Jesus. He says to us,

Isaiah 40: 1: Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. 2: Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins.

## THE OUTCOME

**Exodus 3: 18: And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.**

This is such a comfort to us. All God's elect, all Christ's redeemed, shall hearken to our voice when they hear this gospel of Christ. God shall make them hearken. Christ promised,

John 6: 37: All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

John 6: 45: It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. (Joh 6:45)

Brethren, this is our confidence to send forth this gospel and never lose heart. The Lord says, "*So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*" (Isa 55:11)

Not only shall God make his people hearken to his voice through the gospel, he shall make his people bold to stand and speak to our enemies—"and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God." By Christ strengthening them, Peter and John stood before powerful rulers and declared the gospel of Christ.

Acts 4: 13: Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

All Christ's people are weak, earthen vessels. We have no boldness in ourselves. But Christ has promised to strengthen us before our enemies. So we can say with Paul...

Philippians 1: 20: According to my earnest expectation and *my* hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but *that* with all boldness, as always, *so* now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether *it be* by life, or by death.

Philippians 4: 13: I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

## THE ENEMY

**Exodus 3: 19: And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand. 20: And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go.**

Christ even tells us beforehand what the enemy shall do—"And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand." God only has to leave a man to the bondage of his sinful will and a man will harden his own heart against the word of the LORD as did Pharaoh. Then God justly hardened Pharaoh's heart because of his rejection. Reprobation is God justly turning a man over so that he cannot hear and believe the gospel. The reason is always presented in scripture as being because the man would not hear and believe the gospel.

2 Thessalonians 2: 10...they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11: And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Be sure to understand, God does not arbitrarily save or damn anyone. God saves and damns justly. When God chose his people by free grace in eternity it was with an eye toward Christ justifying us; when God hated those he passed by in eternity it was with an eye toward their unjust rejection of God in time. Both are true because God is just!

But why does God deal with his enemies this way? Christ said to Pharaoh,

Exodus 9: 16: And in very deed for this *cause* have I raised thee up, for to shew *in* thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth. (Ex 9:16)

Always remember, when enemies arise against you, when they reject the gospel and try to slander you—God is declaring his power and his name even in our enemies. It is for the benefit of God’s elect.

Romans 9: 22: *What* if God, willing to shew *his* wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: 23: And that 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?

So Christ promises us what he shall do to our enemies—“*And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go.*” Pharaoh’s mad rejection of God was the means God used to work all his mighty wonders before his people and deliver them out of bondage. Nothing has ever been out of God’s sovereign control. The devil, the fall of man, the crucifixion of Christ, the rejection we encounter today, all is the means God uses to show us the wonders of his saving grace as he deliver us from all our bondage. What comfort this gives us even when we face rejection by our enemies!

## OUR NEEDS

**Exodus 3: 21: And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty: 22: But every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put *them* upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians.**

Christ promises to provide all our needs. In the end, Christ accomplished everything he promised here from the beginning. Our great Savior actually put it into the heart of the Egyptians to favor his people.

Have you ever been surprised when someone you least expected suddenly favored you? When suddenly doors begin to open and you were provided for in your job, and other ways in your lives? Now you know why you found favor in their eyes.

It should not surprise us that God can do such a thing. God our Father chose us by his free favor of grace. Christ redeemed us by his free favor of grace. And the Holy Spirit called us by his free favor of grace. He shall provide all that his people need by his free favor of grace. He has given us dead sinners a new spirit to believe him. Christ provided us with righteousness, justification in him. By his blood we have forgiveness of sins. One day we shall have glory with Christ in heaven. And much easier than all of that, our Lord and Savior is able to control the hearts of men in this world to make them look upon us with favor and provide our every need.

Here is the point we have seen in all this. Every promise Christ has made to us from the beginning, he has and shall bring to pass in the end and none shall stop him from doing so. He says,

Isaiah 46: 9 Remember the former things of old: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else; I *am* God, and *there is* none like me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: 11: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken *it*, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed *it*, I will also do it.

Amen!