

Series: Exodus  
Title: The Leprous Hand Cleansed  
Text: Exodus 4: 6-9  
Date: February 26, 2017  
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

In order for us to be made to hear and believe the gospel, we must be cleansed. Before we can obey the gospel and believe on Christ, turning from all our works, we must be washed from all our sins. God alone performs this work of cleansing his people.

As the LORD prepared Moses, to be the instrument by which the LORD would deliver Israel out of bondage, Moses did not believe the LORD's word. The LORD declared that the people would hearken to Moses. The LORD meant his people would hearken by the LORD cleansing us of our sin so that the LORD makes the word effectual in our hearts. But Moses thought God meant they would hearken because of Moses or they would hearken of themselves. Therefore,

**Exodus 4: 1: And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee.**

So the LORD gave Moses three signs. By these three signs the Lord made his word effectual in Moses and assured him that his people shall hearken and be delivered, not by Moses's ability, but by God's sovereign grace. When God works in us that which these signs typified, God does the same for all his elect.

The first sign was the rod of God. It was a sign of God's power to reveal Christ our Righteousness through the preaching of the gospel.

This time, we focus on the second sign. It involved Moses hand becoming leprous then clean again.

Our subject is "The Leprous Hand Cleansed."

The leprous hand cleansed typifies the cleansing from sin which God alone performs for and in his people.

**Exodus 4: 6: And the LORD said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow. 7: And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh; 8: And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign.**

## OUR SINFULNESS

In scripture, leprosy is a type of sin. At your leisure, I encourage you to read God's word on leprosy in Leviticus 13 & 14.

Leprosy begins with one little spot that appears harmless. When Satan tricked our mother Eve, he made it seem harmless to her to eat of the fruit of the tree which God forbid. But that one little seemingly harmless spot, led to our father Adam transgressing the law of God which resulted in a dreaded disease called sin.

Leprosy spread rapidly through a person and to others because it was highly contagious. Sin entered by one man but oh how it spread. *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."* (Rom 5: 12)

Leprosy ate a person entirely. So has sin. We come into this world entirely eaten up, ruined, in this loathsome leprosy called sin. *"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."* (Ro 3:10-12)

As far as man's ability, leprosy was an incurable disease. So is sin. *"Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? [then] may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil."* (Jer 13:23)

So to teach Moses that this work of cleansing God's people will not be by Moses' own hand, God quickly shows Moses that his hand is sin by nature due to his fleshly heart, (v6), *"And the LORD said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow."*

Moses hand did not make his heart leprous. His heart made his hand leprous. In Christ's day the entire religious world had this backwards. They do in our day. Self-righteous religion thinks the hand defiles the heart. The Lord Jesus Christ declared it is the heart that defiles the man, not his hand.

Mark 7: 21 :For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, 22: Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: 23: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

Be sure to understand, all these evil things are not simply evil acts that we do now and then; these evil things are the evil thoughts that come from our sin-nature. They are the only thoughts that come from our sinful nature.

Genesis 6: 5: And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.

Therefore, outward reformation of life does not make the heart clean and new. A profession in religion does not make the heart clean. God must cleanse and give a new heart.

Be sure to get this, how did Moses behold his hand leprous? How was he taught what his natural heart is? God spoke by his word. Likewise, we only know the sinfulness of our own hearts when God makes the commandment come and teaches us what the law says about us, "Defiled!"

So here is the first lesson: no sinner is able to cleanse ourselves to behold what we are, to behold we need God to save us, nor are we able to cleanse anyone else.

Titus 3: 5: Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6: Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

## **GOD ALONE MAKES HIS PEOPLE CLEAN**

**Exodus 4: 7: And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his *other* flesh.**

Again, it was not his hand that made Moses hand clean, it was his heart that made his hand clean. God had already created a new heart in Moses. Only at God's command, was Moses made to behold that it was God who had given him a new heart. So it is with us. God alone reveals this to us by his word. Christ declared that the heart must be made new by God's cleansing grace.

Matthew 23: 25: Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. 26: *Thou* blind Pharisee, cleanse first that *which is* within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

Christ declares the inside—the heart—must first be made clean. Then the outside—the hand, the walk and works—will be clean also. Do not misunderstand, Christ is not suggesting sinners have the ability to create a clean heart within us. God repeatedly tells us to do things that we have no ability to do as he did in the covenant of works. But God does it to teach us we have no ability to do it.

Job 14: 4: Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? not one.

Christ is simply saying that a sinner must be cleansed within: a new man, a new heart, created within.

Matthew 12: 33: Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by *his* fruit.

The fruit produced comes from the heart within. We must be made a new tree—a tree of righteousness! So knowing a sinner is unable to cleanse himself within, then how is this clean heart created within a sinner? It is by God alone performing a two part work that God creates a new, clean heart within his people.

Titus 3: 5...by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6: Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;

The Lord Jesus Christ had to do a work for his people in order to make us clean. The work done in us is shed on us abundantly through the work Christ did for us. God commanded that the leprous man had to come to the high priest. You and I must come to Christ the High Priest. The first step to cleansing the leper was that the high priest alone made offerings for the leper. Christ Jesus is the High Priest and he is the offering by which his people are cleansed. In type, a clean bird was made the leper then was slain and his blood collected in a fountain. Then another clean bird was dipped in the blood and let go to fly away. Just as Moses was clean then became leprous, Christ was clean. He knew no sin. He committed no sin. But then Christ was made sin—made the leper—for God's elect lepers. (2 Cor 5: 21)

1 Peter 2: 24: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree,...

God's law required the leper be put outside the camp, alone, away from everyone.

Leviticus 13: 46: All the days wherein the plague *shall be* in him he shall be defiled; he *is* unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp *shall* his habitation *be*.

This was to typify Christ who suffered without the gate when he was made sin for his people.

Hebrews 13:12: Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

Worst of all, Christ suffered alone for three hours on the cross, because God's law and justice required that God forsake him in divine judgment when sin was found on him. But when justice was satisfied, the clean bird dipped in his own blood, flew away into God's presence, the High Priest entered the true holiest of holies, having washed his people in his own blood.

Revelation 1:5:...Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,...

Zechariah 13: 1: In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. 2: And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, *that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.*

In Zechariah, God declared the work that must be performed within us lepers. The blood has to be applied to the leper by the High Priest. Just as God spoke the word to Moses by which he was made clean, Christ speaks the word, and...

Titus 3: 5...according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6: Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

In regeneration, God "*cuts off the names of the idols out of the land of our flesh. And they shall no more be remembered.*" God causes "*the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land*" when God cleanses our hearts through the blood of Christ.

So God showed Moses by this sign that this is how his people would be made clean. It would not be by Moses works. But it would be by God's works in Christ Jesus his Son.

#### **THROUGH THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL**

**Exodus 4: 8: And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign.**

Remember, this is God teaching Moses how the people would hearken to his word. This cleansing work is accomplished by God through the preaching of the gospel of God's marvelous works. When God creates a new, clean heart within his child, Christ says to us through the preaching of the gospel, "*Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.*" (Jn 15: 3)

He declares to us that now we are delivered out of our bondage and are able to draw near to God in Christ in true communion with God, saying into effectually into our hearts, "*Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.*" (Heb 10:22)

Be sure to get this, we saw how Christ said when the inside is cleansed the outside will be, too. It was the hand plucked out of the bosom which made manifest what was within! Left with our defiled heart, the sinner will only bring forth a defiled hand, he will deny his ruined and lost condition. And as long as man seeks to conceal his inward, sinful heart, denying he is a guilty, undone sinner, there is no hope for him. All false religions teach sinners to make themselves a disguise, to hide their leprosy.

But God's gospel teaches us effectually by giving us a new heart and the hand that comes forth manifests a man has a new heart. The fruit God produces is that we come out into the light, confessing to God our own lost condition, our sins. This is true repentance. And we confess Christ cleansed us and by his blood alone we are saved. That is true faith. Those are the fruits God produces by creating within his child a new, clean heart.

So the lesson is that we are made to hearken to God's word only when God has created a clean heart in us through the justifying and sanctifying work of Christ on our behalf through the preaching of the gospel of Christ! Thus God revealed to Moses that it is by this sanctifying work of God that his people would hearken to the word of the LORD which Moses declared to them.

One last thing, when God has cleansed us, another fruit is that we will go forth preaching God's word all about God's works, assured that God will cleanse whoever he is pleased to cleanse through it. Christ tells us to preach this word and he will do what only he can do through this gospel. He says to us, "*Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.*" (Mt 10: 8)

**Amen!**