

Public Service at Surabaya - Sunday, March 09, 2008

The book of Exodus chapter 32 is overall divided into five parts as follows:

1. vs. 1 – 6 about golden calf
2. vs. 7 – 14 about God's wrath
3. vs. 15 – 20 about the two tablets of stone being broken (signifying redemption)
4. vs. 21 – 29 about the wrath of Moses toward Aaron and the people of Israel (signifying sanctification)
5. vs. 30 – 35 about the prayer of Moses over the people of Israel (signifying the ministry of reconciliation).

We are learning the second part that is about God's wrath. Exodus 32: 7-10.

7 And the LORD said to Moses, "Go, get down! For your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves.

8 "They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. They have made themselves a molded calf, and worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, 'This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!'"

9 And the LORD said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and indeed it is a stiff-necked people!

10 "Now therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation."

When God saw that the Israelites were making golden calf, He was wrathful. We have learned three things provoking God to anger, they are:

1. (vs. 7) The people of Israel had corrupted themselves.
2. (vs. 8) The people of Israel had turned aside out of the way of the Lord.
3. (vs. 9) The people of Israel had made themselves a stiff-necked / hard-hearted people

From these three causes, in verse 10 >>> 10 "Now therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation."

Because of these three causes God was wrathful upon Israelites and wanted to consume them.

Yet Moses attitudes as the shepherd of the congregation >>> **Exodus 32: 11-14**

11 Then Moses pleaded with the LORD his God, and said: "LORD, why does Your wrath burn hot against Your people whom You have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand?"

12 "Why should the Egyptians speak, and say, 'He brought them out to harm them, to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from Your fierce wrath, and relent from this harm to Your people.

13 "Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of I give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.'"

14 So the LORD relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people.

In confronting the corrupted congregation, Moses came with love. So, in a marriage >>> parents may face wild children who are the same as Israelites that are stone-hearted, corrupted, and turned aside out of Lord's way, Moses confronted them with love. Moses prayed to beg for God's love fulfilled his life, and then he prayed for the Israelites. Pray for himself in order to get God's love >>> it is especially for a shepherd and then he is able to pray for people of God and it is so called intercession prayer. So, it is in the shepherding service system that we know the term intercession prayer.

There are two kinds of intercession prayer/ intercession prayer as following:

1. intercession prayer is lifted by the Great High Priest Lord Jesus Christ who sits on the right side of God Father
2. intercession prayer which is lifted by a shepherd/ a man in the world who is trusted by God,

In short, the main assignments of a shepherd in this world are:

- feeding the flock or congregation with the shepherding word
- lifting intercession prayer for the flock or congregation

If a shepherd does not want to feed the flocks/ preach the word of Lord, he is not a truly shepherd. Whatever is the condition of a shepherd, if it is God's calling for him to be a shepherd, his main task is to deliver the shepherding word. There are a lot of reasons for me not to serve you now in Surabaya since I have to prepare for 7 services in Ciawi but flock need food. Therefore, we are the shepherds who get the personal calling from God need to be prayed in order these shepherds do their main task. If a shepherd

does not do the main task, he is not a sincerely shepherd and it is so dangerous because in John 10 it is stated that they are hired people. There are other tasks, for instance visiting the people of God, but this task is helped by care team.

We are back to intercession prayer whose context is on verse 11-14 >>> so, intercession prayer is a prayer which is lifted by a shepherd to God with great responsibility >>> **Hebrews. 13: 17.** *Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.*

This is the intercession prayer which is lifted by a shepherd with following attitudes:

- the intercession prayer should be lifted with full of responsibility and with cheerful heart/ without any force and also without moan and complain. Even though the congregation is corrupt, a shepherd has to pray the intercession prayer with joy and responsibility.
- the intercession prayer should be lifted with love of God >>> Moses prayed for God's love so that it fulfilled his life, then he was able to pray for the people of God/ Israelites with love.
- the intercession prayer should be lifted for the sake of souls of the people of God/ flocks.

In fact, God's wrath is caused by three reasons namely:

- vs. 7 >>> The people of Israel had corrupted themselves.
 - vs.8 >>> The people of Israel had turned aside out of the way of the Lord
 - vs. 9 >>> The people of Israel had made themselves a stiff-necked / hard-hearted people
- So, in verse 10 >>> God's wrath should consume the Israelites or they got punishment/ destruction, yet it is because of intercession prayer from a shepherd for souls of people of God/ the flocks that they are safe.

In conclusion, salvation of soul for the people of God is defined as:

1. protecting the people of God from God's wrath or softening God's heart so that He does not get wrath upon them. I often give an example about fig tree which grew beside the road and one which grew in vineyard. Even though they did not produce fruits, they still had differences. The fig tree which grew on the side of road >>> when Jesus was hungry and wanted to eat its fruit, but He did not get the fruit, He said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again." Immediately the fig tree withered away = perish. However, one which was planted in vineyard and did not generate its fruit for three years, so that its lord claimed that it is useless and had someone to cut it. Yet, the keeper/ shepherd of the vine begged >>> 'No, Sir! Give one year more time so that it gets opportunity to generate its fruits. If it does not produce any fruits, you may cut it '. This is the importance of intercession prayer of a shepherd for souls of the people of God, it means to protect the people of God from His wrath/ soften God's heart in order not to consume the people of God. I hope we understand it.
2. **Exodus 32: 13** *"Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of I give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.'"*

So intercession prayer is related to salvation of souls of people of God/flocks, it means intercession prayer is related to protection from God's wrath/ softening God's heart so that He does not punish His people/ flocks. The second is in line with God's promise. The intercession prayer is important to make the people of God stay in the promise of God that is to enter and to inherit Canaan land/ New Jerusalem for ever. This is the intercession prayer from a shepherd for the salvation of the people of God. I hope we can understand it.

Let's pray for me! I, a shepherd, need your prayer so that I am able to be seriously trusted by God with these following attitudes:

- feeding the flocks as the main assignment
- lifting intercession prayer for the salvation of souls of the flocks/the people of God.

If there had been no intercession prayer from a shepherd/ Moses, all of Israelites would have been destroyed by God. Therefore, it is important to lift intercession prayer and this only exists in the shepherding service system since these two main assignments cannot be separated. After being trusted to feed, a shepherd can be trusted to lift intercession prayer. If a shepherd does not feed the flocks, there will be no intercession prayer although he professes that he prays, but if he does not feed the sheep, there will be no intercession prayer. A shepherd cannot do only one task, yet he has to do both of them.

Now, the people of God or the sheep have to do as follows:

Hebrews 13: 17 *Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.*

1. **do not make the shepherd moan and complain.** Making the shepherd moan and complain = inviting the God's wrath because God will also moan and complain and intercession prayer from a shepherd will be hindered. It is dangerous since the intercession prayer is a protection or covering, yet if a shepherd moans and complains so that the intercession prayer is hindered, the covering will be open and invite God's wrath within the congregation. If the covering is open the congregation

will be not quiet, even scattered, because of the heat and rain. And the biggest disadvantage is losing salvation. This is a very serious thing, therefore we have to keep our attitudes each other. I keep my attitudes by accomplishing my main tasks those are feeding the congregation and praying for them. The congregations keep their attitudes in order not to make the shepherd moan and complain.

2. **being obedient to the Shepherd's voice/ the shepherding word.** In 1 Peter 5 which is the verse of shepherding service system, there is an idea of being obedient in the shepherding service system **1 Peter 5:5, 6.**

5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,

If we obey the shepherding word/ Shepherd's voice, we are under the mighty hands of God, the Great Shepherd and it denotes a protection or a covering. This is the way to be obedient for the congregations so that they are on the presence of the mighty hands of God, the Great Shepherd and they will get a covering of protection from the Great Shepherd.

If we see a frame of mind to be an obedient in Luke 1 that is submission of Mary even though she had to sacrifice everything since she had to be pregnant before getting married when she was still a virgin. Her sacrifice is like a sacrifice of her own ghost because based on the laws of Moses, she had to be thrown with stones until she died. However, her submission conveyed her to be under the mighty hands of God, the Great Shepherd.

Luke 1: 34, 35, 37, 38.

34 Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"

35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

37 "For with God nothing will be impossible."

38 Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

I repeat, in 1 Peter 5:5 it is said that Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

It is about a young man who has to be obedient. A young man refers to a strong person in the terms of wealthy, skill, or powerful position in the world, yet he/ she must be obedient in the shepherding service system. In fact, there are a lot of rich people who want to lead others in a church/ shepherding service system, which undeserved before God.

An obedient young man also has position under the mighty hands of God, the Great Shepherd so that he will feel these following good points:

1. a protection/ shelter from the Great Shepherd
2. from the example of an obedient Mary >>> 'Let it be to me according to your word' >>> because there are nothing impossible for God. Mary underwent >>> the mighty hands of God, the Great Shepherd, wiped all of impossibilities if there is a frame of mind of being obedience.

I will show you 3 times of a frame of mind of being obedience which wipe impossibilities through eras from women who are the description of churches of God. Here it is:

1. **Sarah who represents the era of God Father >>> Genesis 18: 11-15**

11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; and Sarah had passed the age of childbearing.

12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?"

13 And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?'

14 "Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."

15 But Sarah denied it, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. And He said, "No, but you did laugh!"

Sarah was barren and menopause so that she did not have any expectation to bear a child. In Israelites' point of view, barrenness is a shame. Therefore Sarah laughed, yet she was afraid or bitter laughed actually since there was not a joy in her life. Nevertheless, Sarah obeyed her husband as she did to the Lord and called her husband 'lord'. It is meant that she had obeyed the word of Lord by obeying her husband. It is written in 1 Peter and the blessing of being obedience is God wipes all of impossibilities.

1 Peter 3:1, 5, 6

1 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,

5 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands,

6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.

Although a wife has a cruel husband she has to obey him, as God says. This is a realization of being obedience to the shepherding word as Sarah had done. She obeyed Abraham and was not angry although he gave her to other men, Pharaoh and Abimelech.

Sarah's obedience brought benefit for her that is she was on the presence of the mighty hands of God, the Great Shepherd, which are able to erase impossibilities. She was also protected by God so that she could not be touched by other men. Besides, the mighty hands of God, the Great Shepherd erase impossibilities so that Lord opened her womb and she could bear a son until she was able to have joyful laughs.

Now brethren, let us follow Sarah! If our lives are sour or bitter because of earthly things, we can see the opening of doors for those earthly things and also marriage problems like Sarah who had undergone the opening of her womb. Many people get marriage problems and this is like people who face closed doors so that their lives are bitter and unpleasant. Let's start from being obedient! Wives obey the word of God by putting their husbands first and husbands obey the word of God by loving their wives. Meanwhile, children obey the shepherding word through their obedience to their parents.

Sarah, told in Genesis, represents the era of God Father. There was the presence of the mighty hands of God, the Great Shepherd which eliminated impossibilities. Abraham was seventy five years old and it was when he was in age of a hundred year that he had a child. In conclusion, being obedient needs time. Thus, in obedience we wait for God's time and we have to be sure that there is a power to wipe impossibilities and open womb/ marriage and other doors of earthly things which make us happy.

2. **Mary who represents the era of Son of God (Jesus)> Luke 1:38** *Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.*

Mary had to sacrifice anything to be obedient. She was a virgin but she had to be pregnant without having a husband (before she got married). In short, being obedient needs sacrifice as what Jesus did until He gave His life. We have to sacrifice all things in order to obey the shepherding word so we can undergo power of protection because we are in the presence of the mighty hands of God.

The benefit for Mary was she was able to bring forth Jesus, the Savior.>

Matthew 1:21 *"And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."*

This is the second, a power to erase all of impossibilities. The fact that Mary was able to bring forth Jesus as the Savior is meant as *we get spiritual opening doors that is we are saved. Actually sinners must perish/ be consumed by God, but if we are obedient to the word of God we will feel the power of opening doors spiritually that is salvation/ we are saved by the blood of Jesus. This is an impossible thing since there is stated in the Holy Bible> death is reward of sins and we have sinned, either inherit sins or deeds of sin since we are young. The period in which Noah lived is the evidence that there was no child could be saved. It points to the fact that even children were sinners and had to perish so it was impracticable that they were safe. Nevertheless, if today we obey the shepherding word as what Mary did we will get the power to open spiritual doors that is door of salvation and we will not be consumed by God since we get forgiveness and salvation from the blood of Jesus.

Definitions of being saved are:

- o We are not punished/ perished
- o We are capable of walking in righteousness

These two definitions are forms of miracle or unthinkable things for men since all of men has sinned and has to be punished. However, it is a power of erasing impossibilities if we can be saved and live in truth. I hope we can grasp it. This is the second definition of opening spiritual doors > we are set free from God's punishment and we are saved so that we are able to walk in righteousness. Hence, now we should be sure to throw away unrighteous things and live in truth.

3. **The perfect churches of God/ the bride of heaven**

Revelation 12:1-3

1 Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars.

2 Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.

3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads.

The condition of churches of God in the end of the world is like a pregnant woman which is in due time to give birth = in weakest condition. There are a lot of women who are able to walk, sweep the floor and work in offices when they were pregnant. Yet, they will not be able to do anything when they are going to bring forth a baby. This is a description of our condition in the end of the world. Moreover the woman has to confront a great, fiery red dragon which is sent to the earth to

hunt the woman.

Fortunately, the woman has a sign of obedience that is a garland of twelve stars on her head. This garland of twelve stars on her head refers to the gifts of Holy Spirit and obedience to the shepherding word. Thus, we have to be obedient in these times.

A shepherd has a task to lift the intercession prayer wholeheartedly for the flocks. If in the shepherding service system we are obedient to the shepherding word, we will be in the presence of the mighty hands of God, the Great Shepherd which is able to be a shelter for us so that there is a power to eliminate impossibilities. It can be seen in the story of Sarah, Mary and the churches of God. The churches of God in the end of the world are like a woman who is in due time to give birth and has to face a great, fiery red dragon. In the earthly point of view, the churches of God are, of course, dead. Yet, since she has sign of obedience, she is in the presence of the mighty hands of God, the Great Shepherd.

The advantages of obedience/ a garland of twelve stars are:

1. **Revelation 12:6** *Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.*

If we only read this verse it will seem unthinkable because a pregnant woman who is in due time to give birth and in her weakest condition will not be able to run away from the dragon. However, the verse explains the others.

Revelation 12:14 *But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.*

The woman does not use her feet to run away but she is given two wings of great eagle. This is the great miracle of God. So, the first advantages of weak woman is the mighty hands of the Great Shepherd gives two wings of a great eagle to fly the churches of God to the wilderness for three and a half time from the presence of the serpent. We are protected and nourished by God directly. If the dragon wants to swallow her directly, God also protects and blesses us directly.

This kind of protection has happened when Israelites walked in the desert for forty years, without planted or harvested anything, without worked but God blessed them directly. We will also feel what Israelites felt for three and a half years yet without murmur and death as Israelites did. For three and a half years we will be in the presence of God's shelter and blessing directly through the word of God and holy communion/ Christ's sacrifice since these things will be our food and strength.

Let's my fellows! If there are two wings of the great eagle, we will be set free from antichrist which threatens us directly, let alone the sufferings nowadays. We are like a woman who is in her due time to give birth and weak because of those great sufferings which come directly from Satan. However, God is able to help and fly us to the wilderness if we are obedient.

2. If the woman/ the churches of God are obedient, she will get the shelter and flee to the wilderness with two wings of great eagle and get the power to eliminate impossibilities. The woman will be in the wilderness for three and a half years. After that, Jesus will come for the second period and the woman will be changed as glorious as Him.

The fact that after three and a half period in the wilderness Jesus will come for the second time and renew us until we are perfect as Him is a power to erase all kinds of impossibilities. **Philippians 3: 20, 21**

20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

The second benefit is the mighty hands of the Great Shepherd empower to change us to be perfect and glorious as He is that is the Bride of Heaven. For what? For being exalted in due time. 1 Peter 5:6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,

Staying under the mighty hands of God, we feel these following things:

- Power to protect us
- Power to eliminate impossibilities
- Power to exalt us in due time in clouds of glory and we will meet God forever and ever.

This is the reality that a person who is under the God's wrath will not be punished if he/she is shepherded. The Israelites has corrupted themselves, turned aside of the way of Lord, were stiff-necked, set golden calf and were cursed by God since He said 'I'll consume them', yet Moses prayed for them.

Therefore it is important to be shepherded nowadays because:

- A shepherd feeds the flocks and
- Lifts the intercession prayer wholeheartedly, full of responsibility and love.

While the attitude of the congregation is obeying the shepherding word so that they live under the mighty hands of the Great Shepherd which protect them, erase impossibilities as follows:

- Sarah who is a description for churches of God who are in bitter laugh and barrenness yet because of her obedience she

gets the power to wipe impossibilities that is her womb was opened and she could laugh happily.

- Mary, who had to be pregnant and bring forth the baby of Jesus, describes sinners who have to die but they can be saved. It refers to the opening of doors in spiritual things so that we are saved by God. This is the reality of God's power to help us now. Perhaps we are evil or filthy but if we obey His word we get the power to save us.
- The churches of God are like a woman in her due time to give birth and so weak. Maybe we are so weak, hopeless, and disappointed because there are no solutions for our problems. However, we have to remember that if there is submission, God will give us two wings of a great eagle to fly us to the wilderness so that all sorts of tribulations are resolved by God. The power of God throws away all impossibilities and changes our lives from now on until we are same as God in the time of Jesus second coming. His hands will also lift and exalt us in the glorious clouds until we live together with God forever. This is the mercy of God for people who have to be consumed, but they can be exalted in the glorious clouds if they obey God and live in the presence of the mighty hands of the Great Shepherd.

God bless us!