

Exodus 8:20–32

“The God Who Makes the Difference”

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What does Yahweh make known about Himself in the fourth plague? Pastor leads his family in today's "Hopewell @Home" passage. Exodus 8:20–32 prepares us for the opening portion of Morning Public Worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these thirteen verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that our God is a God of distinctions—especially in sovereign, electing mercy.

Wednesday, November 3, 2021 • Read Exodus 8:20–32

Questions from the Scripture text: Who speaks to whom (v20)? When is Moses to rise? Where is he to go (cf. 7:15)? What is Moses to say (cf. 7:16, 8:1)? What will the Lord do if Pharaoh doesn't (v21)? On which three groups of people and in which location? But not where or on whom (v22)? That Pharaoh may know what? What will the Lord "make" (v23)? What happened (v24)? Then where did Pharaoh tell them to sacrifice (v25)? What does Moses say about doing so (v26)? Why wouldn't it be right? Where does Moses say they will go instead (v27)? What concession does Pharaoh make (v28)? For what does he ask? What does Moses say that he will do (v29)? But what does he say for Pharaoh not to do? What does Moses do (v30)? And what does Yahweh do (v31)? With what miraculous result? But what does Pharaoh do (v32a) and not do (v32b)?

If you're Pharaoh, and you've got a ritual washing as the first thing on the agenda every day, you might want to clear the rest of the agenda if Moses shows up to your first appointment (v20). The 80-year-old Hebrew is about to ruin your day—unless, of course, you are willing to let Yahweh's people go that they may serve Him (v21). But Pharaoh isn't willing. He doesn't have it in himself to be willing, and the Lord is justly withholding the grace that could make him willing.

This is the fourth plague. In the third one, we saw something new: that the Lord does not owe sinners a warning or a call to repentance. Now, Pharaoh gets those back, but the Lord does something else new: He makes a distinction (v23), "in order that you may know that I am Yahweh" (v22).

From the beginning of creation, we have seen that God is a God of distinctions: light and darkness, water and dry land, male and female. Even the temptation to eat the fruit was a temptation to be the one who makes the distinction between good and evil—to this day, one of the clearest marks of the wicked is that they call evil good and good evil.

Now, we see God displaying Himself as the God Who makes distinctions in the sphere of providence/redemption. The reason that v24 finds the Egyptians covered and corrupted with the flies, and the Israelites unaffected, is not found in any moral or spiritual superiority on Israel's part. As anyone familiar with the rest of the Bible will tell you, the reality about Israel is that they can sin with the best of them. No, as v23 specifically points out, it is God Himself Who makes the difference.

How hard is Pharaoh's heart? In what he probably considers to be a great concession, Pharaoh actually directly disobeys the first part ("let My people go") of Yahweh's command. He says that Israel is to sacrifice *in the land*. Civil government doesn't need to forbid worship in order to express its wicked rebellion against God; it indulges this rebellion quite well by attempting to dictate to God's church how/when/where she may worship.

Moses's response subtly makes the same point: God's right worship is repulsive to the Egyptians (v27). Let those enraptured with God and committed to His way of worship never think that worshiping Him well in the way that He says can be made attractive to the world!

Amazingly, Pharaoh concedes this point (v28), and like many people who will have nothing to do with our God, he still hopes to get some benefits: "intercede for me." Also amazingly (amazing grace!), the LORD answers. As anyone who has tried to deal with a fly infestation can tell you, the miracle in v31 is probably the greatest miracle in the passage: "not ONE remained!"

Our powerful, merciful God shows goodness to all. But, He makes a distinction in reserving His softening, saving grace for His chosen people. For them, it is clearly He, and not they, Who makes the difference!

In what ways does the Lord show Himself today as the God Who makes the difference? How does government try to control Christian worship? What happens when the church worries about whether the world will dislike their worship? To whom is the Lord good? To whom is He savingly gracious?

Sample prayer: Our Creator and Redeemer, we bless Your Name for the wisdom and goodness of the distinctions that You have made. Thank You that one of the ways that You make this distinction is by giving to sinners, who deserve the same Hell as everyone else, softening and salvation instead. Grant unto us to remember that the world will hate Your worship, and us for offering it; but, give us the courage and commitment to offer it to you gladly anyway. For, Christ has earned this, and we ask it through Him, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP2B "Why Do Gentile Nations Rage" or TPH2B "Why Do Heathen Nations Rage"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

Exodus chapter 8. versus 20 through 32. These are God's words and you always said to Moses rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh as he comes out to the water and say to him, thus says Yahweh. Let my people go. That they may serve me. Where else, if you will not let my people go, but hold, I will send swarms of flies on you and you're servants.

And on your people into your houses, the houses, the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground on which they stand. And in that day, all set apart the land of Goshen, and which my people dwell that no, swarms of flies. So be there, in order that you may know that I am Yahweh in the midst of the land, I will make a difference between my people and your people tomorrow, this sign shall be and you already did so thick swarms of flies came into the house of Pharaoh into his servant's houses and into all the land of Egypt.

The land was corrupted because of the swarms of flies unfaro called, from us as an Aaron and said, go sacrifice to your God in the land and Moses said, it is not right to do. So for we would be sacrificing the abomination of the Egyptians to Yahwe. Are God if we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes?

Well, they not stone us. We will go three days journey into the wilderness and sacrificed he all we are God as He will command us. So Pharaoh said, I will let you go. That you may sacrifice you all or your God in the wilderness. At least you're not go very far away.

Intercede for me. Then as I said, Indeed, I am going out from you and I will treat Yahweh. Let the swarms of flies may depart tomorrow, from Pharaoh from this servants, and from his people, but let Pharaoh not deal deceitfully anymore and not letting the people go to sacrifice to Yahwe.

So Moses went out from Pharaoh and a treated Yahweh and y'all way did according to the Word of Moses. He removed the swarms of flies, from Pharaoh, from his servants. And from his people not one remained but there are hardened his heart at this time. Also neither would he let the people go?

So far the reading of God's inspired and inherent word. We have deja vu as it were at the beginning of the passage means I have seen it before. This starts like the first plague and Pharaoh has dÄ©jÄ vu and gets up in the morning and goes out. First thing in the morning for his ritual washing but you always had said to Moses and verse 20.

Rise early in the morning since 10, before Pharaoh, as he comes out to the water. So here comes Pharaoh sleepy. Pharaoh just out of bed for the morning ritual, wash. And oh no, Here's Moses and Aaron. He's been through this before, and yet we've been seeing in each success of plague, the Lord reveals something else about himself.

He's told us that he is making himself known that we shall know that Egypt shall know and that Israel shall know. He said both of those that he is Yahweh by what he does and how he brings his people out of the land. And this manner, We remember last time in the third plague, he didn't send Moses at all.

He didn't give any warning and he doesn't owe us a warning. And he reminded us how just and holy he is and yeah, how merciful that he often, gives sinners warnings and calls to repentance and he's been very merciful to you. My dear children for there are very few in the history of this world who have been so often called to repent of their sin and turn to the God who gives full and free forgiveness and the Lord Jesus Christ.

So we learned in the last flag, in the previous flag, that he doesn't owe us any warning or call to repentance this plague. He, especially reveals himself as Yahweh. Who makes the distinctions you always who makes a difference? He says that and the end of verse 22 in order that you may know that I am Yahweh in the midst of the land, and he says, I will make a difference between my people and your people.

The Lord has revealed himself from the beginning of creation. As one who makes distinctions between things, he made light to separate from the darkness and he separated the light from the darkness. He made the water to gather in one place that the dry land would emerge. He made a distinction between the sea and the land, He made, man, male and female a distinction that in our own cultures under attack.

And he is the one who makes the difference between good and evil. A distinction that Satan tempted, Adam and Eve to want to make for themselves. You shall be like God, deterring good and evil. Well, God discerns. Good and evil by determining good and evil. And the wicked still do that.

Today they want to to call what they want. Good and evil. And so they call evil good and good evil. He

is God who makes a distinction. Well, one of the marvelous things that God does and making a distinction is in salvation, we all deserve hell. And yet God, in his love, has chosen to save some and we are not the ones at all who make that distinction.

He is the one who makes that distinction. Israel is, anybody who is familiar with the rest of their history would, certainly agree with is a very wicked and stubborn people. If you were to pick two prime examples of hard heartedness in the Bible, you might pick Pharaoh. Because of the way this part of Exodus is written but the people of Israel certainly, hard-hearted stiff, neck, stubborn people.

And yet, they were the ones that the Lord had set apart historically and the Lord shows that. He's the one who makes the difference when he saves such sinners as you set centers as I am. And here, he made that difference. Something that you could probably have seen from orbit.

If a man could have been in orbit back then think of it, the land of Egypt divided one-half covered with swarms of flies and yet there was the boundary line to Goshen and not a fly crossed over the boundary and how amazing is that. And what he says, I will make the difference between my people and your people in verse 23 is as if to say, you will see the line where I decide to stand and make the difference.

Not that the Lord Himself appeared there or made an appearance of himself there. But you understand the point and the blackening and corrupting of the land of Egypt and then leaving the land of Goshen alone. So, the Lord is the one who not only decides to save his people, even though they deserve hell.

And so he makes the difference that way But he works all things together for our good. And here makes a difference in the way. His providence falls out to us, the unbeliever. Can't know that all things are to us good. The Lord is good to unbelievers. Merciful, he makes a son to shine rain.

Default In this case, even he, Although giving Moses the words to say, do not deceive again, do not deal deceitful. Let not Pharaoh just deal deceitfully anymore and not letting the people go and verse 29 and Lord, of course. Well knew what verse 32 would say that the Pharaoh hardened, his heart, this time.

Also neither, would he let the people go yet? The Lord's, spared the land and removed the flies. In fact that was perhaps a greater miracle than the swarms. You guys know if we just get a few flies in here and we break out the fly swatters and start killing them.

They're always seems to be one more and yet it said in the end of verse 31, not one remained marvelous, miracle of God's power. There's also a miracle of God's mercy because look at the beginning of verse 31 and Yahweh did according to the Word of Moses. One of the most common phrases in the entire book of Exodus is going to be and Moses to head according to the Word of Yahweh or and they did according to the word, which you always had commanded Moses.

But that the Lord would listen to a man for the sake of his electing love. And for the sake of the atonement that Christ would provide that the Lord would listen to us info. Man, that is a miracle of mercy and that the Lord left. Not one fly. That is a miracle of power.

And this God of miraculous mercy. And miraculous power is the one who makes the difference for us. And so, if we are in danger of being hard-hearted like Pharaoh or like Israel, let us seek from him by his mercy and by his power, to make the difference and to give us a soft heart that we may need him.

That we may worship him. Let's ask him that he would do. So Our Father in heaven, we thank you for reminding and teaching us here in this passage that you are the Lord who makes the difference and that you are able to protect us from having, even a particle of the plagues that fall on the world to come upon us.

Who bless your name for the confidence? It gives us to know that whenever we participate in the misery of this world, that is only to such an extent as you have decided. Who would be good for us when we pray Lord that you would give us soft heartedness towards you.

That we would not be stubborn or rebellious. We marvel at your mercy, that you listen, even now to the words that are being formed by my mouth and agreed with in our hearts and our minds, We marvel at the miracle of your power that just as there was once not one flight remaining in the land of Egypt.

So also there's a new Evans and a new earth, which you are making by your power in, which righteousness will dwell? And which there would be no sin or sorrow or death? No, suffering. Not even one of any of these, not a particle. And so we bless you for your mercy and we bless you for your power.

And we ask that you would grant to us the ministry of your spirit, bless to us. This portion of your word today. Tonight, the rest of our lives and forever, that we might remember that it is you who make the difference, Then we might hope in. You grant it?

We ask through Jesus amen.