

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning Week 7 (February 12-18, 2017)

Spiritually, Satan is permanently defeated on the day we accept Jesus into our hearts, but he lets go of his earthly control only one step at a time. We will examine his technique in this week's devotions. (Reprinted and updated from week 30, 2014.)

Sunday, February 12 (read Exodus 7:1-6)

Then the Lord said to Moses, "See I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron will be your prophet." (Exodus 7:1)

Today's passage identifies the players in the upcoming drama. It is clear that Moses is a picture of **God** in our story while Aaron represents the **Word of God** (prophet, v. 1). Pharaoh is the adversary, so it is plain to see that he pictures **Satan** with his efforts to keep the Jews (and Christians) from accomplishing their goal of leaving slavery in Egypt and moving to the Promised Land. Moses and Aaron are told to say **only** what the Lord commands so that God's Word will fall on the ears of Pharaoh (v. 2). Don't get confused by v. 3 when God says, "But I will harden Pharaoh's heart." When God allows His Word to fall on any heart, it **softens** those who want to believe and **hardens** those who refuse to believe. Two goals are stated for the Exodus: 1) to bring God's people to the Promised Land, and 2) to show the Egyptians that the Lord is the one true God (v. 4-5). We will see how this plays out in the next six devotions.

Monday, February 13 (read Exodus 8:1-15)

Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "Pray to the Lord to take the frogs away from me and my people, and I will let your people go to offer sacrifices to the Lord." (Exodus 8:8)

God desires true **worship** from His people (v. 1), so Satan will do anything to prevent it from happening. The devil does not care if you attend church as long as you don't go for the purpose of changing your life according to the Word of God. This plague of frogs (v. 1-5) follows the plague of blood (Exodus 7:14-24) and devastates the land of Egypt. Pharaoh begs Moses and Aaron to make the frogs go away and promises to release the Jewish people (v. 8). Moses allows Pharaoh to set the time (v.9) and the devilish man says, "**Tomorrow**" (v. 10). Here you have Satan's **first** trick to keep God's people from worshipping Him (**procrastination**). We all know that we should drop our own agendas and concentrate on the Lord, but we often decide to wait until we are older when we think temptations will be fewer. Don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today! God wants you to worship Him!

Tuesday, February 14 (read Exodus 8:20-25)

Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "Go sacrifice to your God here in the land." (Exodus 8:25)

Following the plague of gnats (Exodus 8:16-19), God sends a plague of flies to pester the citizens of Egypt. The Lord's goal is still to have His people experience true worship (v. 20). He protects the Jews from this plague to show the Egyptians that He is in control (v. 22-23). Satan's **second** attempt to stop the people of God from experiencing true worship is in our printed verse above. **The devil would have you believe that you can worship God without obeying His command to go where He sends you.** I have learned personally how this works! God called me from a very successful ministry that demanded a great deal of my time and sent me to a very small church where I have learned to worship Him in a way that I had never experienced before. Don't allow Satan to tell you that you can worship God without going where He sends you and saying what He commands you to say! Obedience to His commands is imperative if you want to enjoy the fullness of your journey to the Promised Land.

Wednesday, February 15 (read Exodus 8:26-32)

We must take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to the Lord our God, as He commands us.” (Exodus 8:27)

Many people have received a **Savior** by accepting Jesus’ death on Calvary as full payment for their sins. Not everyone, however, has taken that three-day journey from the cross to the empty tomb where we receive a **Lord!** Only after taking that three-day journey are we capable of experiencing true worship. Christians worship on Sunday because we trust in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the arrival of the Holy Spirit. Satan’s **third** attempt to stop this from happening is in v. 26 when he says, “**but you must not go very far.**” I call this the Brylcream religion (“a little dab will do you”). The devil doesn’t mind if you go to church as long as you don’t become a fanatic! My Arkansas teens defined a fanatic as someone who loves the Lord more than I do. Is your faith affecting the way you live? If not, you are still listening to the “prince of this world” as he tries to prevent true worship of God.

Thursday, February 16 (read Exodus 10:1-11)

“No! Have only the men go; and worship the Lord, since that’s what you have been asking for.” (Exodus 10:11a)

The 8th plague sent on Pharaoh is a plague of locusts that eat up nearly everything in the land (v. 1-7). God is still seeking true worship from His people (v. 3). Pharaoh inquires to see how many of the Jews will be involved in this journey (v.8) and is told that true worship involves the **entire family** as well as all their **possessions** (v. 9). This is where we see Satan’s **fourth** attempt to prevent God’s people from experiencing real worship when he declares, “**have only the men go**” (v. 11). The devil knows that when we really learn to worship, it will affect the rest of our family. That’s why I have often asked you to claim Acts 16:31 as your personal promise from God. Have you seen the results of your faith on your family? Trust the Lord to fulfill His Word in the lives of your family members!

Friday, February 17 (read Exodus 10:21-29)

Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and said, “Go, worship the Lord. Even your women and children may go with you; only leave your flocks and herds behind.” (Exodus 10:24)

The 9th plague sends total darkness over Egypt for three days (21-23). This brings about Satan’s **fifth** attempt to stop God’s people from experiencing true worship. Satan knows you will never truly worship God **until you release your grip on your possessions**. Even if you involve your entire family in worship, you will never experience the complete joy of this time until you **offer** God your worldly goods without complaining. Moses informs Pharaoh that the people are to trust God with **all** their possessions. The Lord will decide what He wants to take from our hands (v. 25-26). Have you noticed how many people get offended when the sermon is about giving? Can you see how Satan is keeping God’s people from experiencing true worship?

Saturday, February 18 (read Exodus 12:1-32)

*“Take your flocks and herds, as you have said, and go. **And also bless me.**” (Exodus 12:32, emphasis mine)*

God’s final plague on the people of Egypt is the death of all firstborn children in the land. Only the Jewish people with the blood of the spotless lamb over the doorframes will be spared this horrible fate (v. 1-13). This is a picture of our status with the Lord of the New Testament. The blood of Jesus is placed over our lives, so God says, “When I see the blood, I will pass over you” (v. 13). Satan’s **sixth** and final attempt to keep you from experiencing true worship is in today’s printed verse. You cannot go forward to real worship as long as you are **looking back** to the “good old days” when Satan was in control of your life. The Israelites began looking back to Egypt as soon as problems occurred (Exodus 14:10-12). Nothing **blesses** Satan more than having God’s people look back at their life of sin as though they miss those days. Memorize Philippians 3:12-14 in your effort to prevent the devil from winning this victory!