

Public Service at Surabaya - Sunday Evening, October 07, 2007

We still discuss Jude which points to the badger skins in Tabernacle. We have discussed verse 24 and 25 which are the closing of Jude. In this verse, God reveals His love to keep us away from stumbling and bring us to righteousness so we are faultless/ perfect as Jesus.

Jude 1:24, 25

1:24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,

1:25 To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.

So, the sign of true churches is there is no sin of stumbling. It means we are not easy to be stumbled and become stumbling for others.

Matthew 18:6

18:6 "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

To cause one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin = stumbling = sin of stumbling = a millstone which is hung around neck, and drowned in the depth of the sea.

The causes of sin of stumbling are below:

1. A millstone = hard stone like a crocodile

Job 41:15

41:15 His heart is as hard as stone, Even as hard as the lower millstone.

Job 40:20

40:20 "Can you draw out Leviathan with a hook, Or snare his tongue with a line which you lower?

Who is the crocodile?

Ezekiel 29:3

29:3 "Speak, and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I am against you, O Pharaoh king of Egypt, O great monster who lies in the midst of his rivers, Who has said, 'My River is my own; I have made it for myself.

A crocodile or a great monster is Pharaoh and a wolf is Herod. So, the cause of the sin of stumbling is stone heart which is like Pharaoh's heart and it is the description of Satan.

The practices of Pharaoh's stone heart are:

a. Exodus 9:27, 28

9:27 And Pharaoh sent and called for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "I have sinned this time. The LORD is righteous, and my people and I are wicked.

9:28 "Entreat the LORD, that there may be no more mighty thundering and hail, for it is enough. I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer."

After the hail got into Egypt, Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron to end the hail. However, after the hail stopped, what happen to Pharaoh -a man who was easy to be stumbled and offended?-

Exodus 9:34, 35

9:34 And when Pharaoh saw that the rain, the hail, and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet more; and he hardened his heart, he and his servants.

9:35 So the heart of Pharaoh was hard; neither would he let the children of Israel go, as the LORD had spoken by Moses.

So, the practice of stonehearted man who is easy to be stumbled and offended is does not want to repent from his sins.

It is like what is written in **Romans 2:5**

2:5 But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the

day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,

This is the stone heart which does not want to repent from sins because it keeps on sinning so it is easier to be stumbled and offended.

Men often do not want to repent from their sins, especially lying. They also keep on lying like Pharaoh who seemed repent from his sins as he said 'The LORD is righteous, and my people and I are wicked.', but after the end of the hail he lied.

Jeremiah 9:5

9:5 Everyone will deceive his neighbor, And will not speak the truth; They have taught their tongue to speak lies; They weary themselves to commit iniquity.

If God points out our sins by His words and daily happening/ trashing that fall in our life (like Pharaoh and the hail), He wants us to repent from our sins. Nevertheless, if we do not want to repent/ we keep on lying/ we are hesitate to repent from sins, it will come the time when we cannot repent from our sins like Satan. It is like what is written in Romans 2 that we are only treasuring up ourselves wrath in the day of wrath in hell if we do not want to repent.

So, there will be two sides; they are:

- People who want to repent from their sins and they will continuously repent from their sins until they cannot sin and it means they are perfect.
- People who do not want to repent from their sins and it will come the time that they cannot repent anymore and will receive the condemnation. I hope we can understand it.

This is the first cause of stone heart like Pharaoh's by keeping on sinning (do not want to repent until they cannot repent).

b. Exodus 7:14, 16

7:14 So the LORD said to Moses: "Pharaoh's heart is hard; he refuses to let the people go.

7:16 "And you shall say to him, 'The LORD God of the Hebrews has sent me to you, saying, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me in the wilderness"; but indeed, until now you would not hear!

One who has stone heart like Pharaoh prevented Israelites to serve God. Now, it means stone heart is not faithful and even deserts the service and devotion. One who is not faithful and even deserts the service and devotion is only useless before God even though he is rich, not smart or has authority.

Malachi 3:18

3:18 Then you shall again discern Between the righteous and the wicked, Between one who serves God And one who does not serve Him.

The righteous is a person who serves God, while an unfaithful person who does not serve God will be different. Maybe now we are jealous when looking at an unfaithful person who receives blessing while a faithful person is in poorness, yet God never deceives us for He will show the difference between them.

What is meant by 'difference'?

Malachi 4:1

4:1 "For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven, And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," Says the LORD of hosts, "That will leave them neither root nor branch.

The proud = the wicked. The difference is one who is unfaithful in his service and devotion to God is only like stubble/ useless life which are only waiting for being burnt in the condemnation fire of God.

For the students, you may look for high education, but it will be useless if you do not balance it with service and devotion. So do you who work. You can work and be blessed. It is good, yet it will be useless if you are unfaithful and desert the service and devotion. These people will only wait for the condemnation fire of God.

On the other hand, a faithful person is useful --> **1 Timothy 4:8-10**

4:8 For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.

4:9 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.

4:10 For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all

men, especially of those who believe.

Service and devotion are useful in everything since they contain double promises as follows:

- Promise of nourishing from God to our life now on.
- Promise of nourishing from God to our future and everlasting life with God.

Let us have a look in the history in Holy Bible at the time Israelites were in the dessert after going out of Egypt. They were not able to sow and harvest because they do not have something to be planted. Then, how could they survive?

They were able to survive because they serve God and He gave them manna. We have to believe in it since it is not a fable, but truly a fact.

In short, serving God has a guarantee for our life now, our future and our everlasting life with God as it is said '*For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach*'. If we are convinced that in the service and devotion there are double promises of God for our life now, our future and everlasting life, we will fight for committing our service and devotion more than everything in this world. Hence, we have to be serious right now; do not be stubborn like Pharaoh who forbade Israelites to serve God. If we are unfaithful in our service and devotion nowadays and even desert it, we will receive bad luck or the condemnation of God. Our life is only like stubble which is going to be burnt by the fire of heaven and will be destroyed forever. I hope we can understand it.

c. **Exodus 7:16**

7:16 "And you shall say to him, 'The LORD God of the Hebrews has sent me to you, saying, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me in the wilderness"; but indeed, until now you would not hear!"

The third practice of stone heart like Pharaoh is being disobedient to the word of God.

In tabernacle (I have explained it for several times), obedience has three levels as following:

- court: obedience to our earthly parents
- holy place: obedience to our spiritual parents/ shepherd
- the most holy place: obedience to our heavenly parent/ God/ the word of God

Thus, we have to have a meek heart that is an obedient heart. In contrast, the disobedient Christians/ servants of God are similar to foolish Christians as it is written in Matthew 7 and the fact is there is a lot of foolish Christians --> they are willing to hear the word of God although they are sleepy, but they do not want to obey the word of God so that they are not tested.

Matthew 7:26, 27

7:26 "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand:

7:27 "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

Hearing the word of God, but do not obey it = one who builds his house on the sand, and then the wind, rain and floods come so the house falls = not tested.

The Rain= Satan with its spirit of evil and filthiness. One who does not obey the word of God will fall into evil and filthiness, especially for young people who are easy to fall into these sins even though they are Christians who serve God, but they are disobedient.

The wind= false prophets and their false doctrines. Christians are not tested since they do not practice the word of God/ the word of God does not become flesh and blood so they do not have ability to face the false prophets and their false doctrines. People who are like this are easy to be deceived and tossed to and fro since the word of God does not become their individual experience. Therefore, we have to do the word of God nowadays so we are strong and tested to confront the wind.

The floods= antichrist with its temptations in economic field.

If we are easy to be hopeless and discouraged, we will not be tested so we will leave God easily. On the other hand, being proud of ourselves in our little success is similar to hopeless and discouraged = not tested.

The house falls= our spiritual life falls and our earthly life also falls and the fall is great until no one can repair it again, except mercy of God. This is the practice of disobedient people. I hope we can understand it.

For young people, if you do not obey the word of God, your future will be failed and destroyed since obedience is the beginning of success.

Consequence of being disobedient is:

Matthew 18:6

18:6 "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

Consequence of being disobedient is getting into the sin of stumbling so our neck is like hung by a millstone which is drowned in the depth of the sea.

Definitions of a millstone are:

- **Physically**, a millstone is used to grind wheat to be powder and it refers to economic problems. If a millstone is drowned in the depth of the sea, it will not be able to grind wheat again. One who is easy to be stumbled will tumble into economic problems.

We, particularly I who have to face the congregation, may not be easily stumbled and become stumble because our economy condition will be stumbled too/ there are difficulties in economy. Thus, we have to be alert.

For young people who are still studying, you will find difficulties in your study if you are easily stumbled/ become stumbling. We have to correct this right now. I hope we can understand it.

- **Spiritually**, wheat = the word of God. So, a millstone which is drowned in the depth of the sea means we cannot eat the word of God so our heart becomes empty. I remind you that an empty house (although it is clean and neat) = one who has been redeemed by the blood of Jesus if it is empty will be the throne of seven Satan which are more evil and filthy. Hence, we have to be watchful by praying. For me, I have to pray so every delivery of the word of God can be accepted, eaten, understood, believed and done. Do not let this heart empty as it will be the place of seven Satan with the spirits of evil and filthiness. This is the sin of stumbling which is very burdensome even though people see that it is only a little sin. I hope we can understand it.

In contrast, if we are obedient, we will be tested and successful --> **Matthew 7:24, 25**

7:24 "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:

7:25 "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock."

The result of being obedient people is we will be tested and our spirituality is built to be the perfect body of Christ. I hope we can understand it.

In conclusion, the causes of sin of stumbling which is like a millstone/ stone heart/ a crocodile heart like Pharaoh's heart are:

- a. do not want to repent from sins
- b. do not want to be faithful and even desert the service and devotion and
- c. do not want to be obedient.

For women, if your neck wears a millstone, you will seem ugly. So, one who is easy to be stumbled and become stumbling has a bad future. Thus, we have to throw the causes of sin of stumbling that is stone heart since that sin brings heavy consequences.

In the closing verse of Jude, God really shows his love so we are not easy to be stumbled, but he wants us to be faultless. We only choose --> if we are stumbled, we will go to Babylon and become the bride of Satan. If we are not stumbled, we will be faultless and become the bride of heaven.

2. **Sin of babylon**

The last cause of sin of stumbling is sin of Babylon --> **Revelation 18:21**

18:21 Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore."

Being stumbled = being drowned = all of our life is thrown down and we will get into sins of Babylon and become the bride of Satan which is destroyed forever in hell and will not be lifted forever. This is a very serious thing. I do not curse you, but it is especially for me, so we are not easy to be stumbled and become stumbling. We are often stumbled by little things. Therefore, we have to be alert. Let us look at ourselves, including me. --> If our service does not improve, we have to correct our heart which is easy to be stumbled/ stone heart and we often do not realize it as it comes from little things. We fall because of small stones, not big ones or poles.

Now, we have known the causes of sin of stumbling that is stone heart/ crocodile heart like Pharaoh's heart. Thus, we have

to have meek heart right now so we have ability to obey the word of God and worship God for neck points to worship. By worshipping God, our neck wears a necklace of mercy of God, not a millstone.

Proverbs 3:3

3:3 Let not mercy and truth forsake you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart,

If we have a meek heart, we repent from our old sins and then we are faithful and wholehearted in our service and devotion and obey the word of God, we will be able to worship God so our neck wears the necklace of mercy of God.

It is better if we give in right now. Do not be easy to be stumbled and offended particularly in your marriage. If you want to feel improvement in your life, you have to end all of your bitter and wicked feeling for if it is not ended, you will fall down gradually. Do not keep your bitter and wicked feeling!

In the shepherding service system, we also have to end the bitter and wicked feeling --> I am a shepherd, if I am wrong, I will repair it for I do not want to fall down and be drowned.

If all of us have meek heart, we will be able to worship God and wear the necklace of mercy of God. Our position is like a baby in hands of God. In Isaiah 49, it is written Israelites' crying. They said that God has forsaken them, but God said the contrast.

Isaiah 49:14-16

49:14 But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me, And my Lord has forgotten me."

49:15 "Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you.

49:16 See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me.

I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands = God carries us.

Before Me = God looks at us.

If we stay outside the hands of God, we will fall into the depth of the sea. If we become stumbling stone/ stone heart = outside the hands of God and will be drowned into the depth sea. However, if we are willing to be meek, we will be able to worship God/ we are in the hands of God like a baby in the carrying hands of God.

Although there is a mother forgets her nursing child and a husband forgets his own wife because their love is decreased, mercy of God will not change. He will carry us forever and it is the safest place. Hence, husband/ wife may not have stone heart because it makes you forget your couple. It is better if you all have meek heart so husband, wife and children are in the hands of God and also all of the servants of God are in the carrying hands of God and will feel the mercy of God.

David was a rich king, yet he needed the mercy of God to forgive his sins as all men are sinners. When we are in the hands of God and we fall into sins, we will have ability to cry 'God, help me!' and He will forgive us.

The advantages of being in the hands of God are:

a. Psalms 51:1, 3

51:1 <

51:3 Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness; According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions.

It is like a baby in his mother's carry. He cannot say if he wants to go to restroom, but he will unexpectedly defecate in his mother's lap --> as long as he is in his mother's hand, she will clean it.

So are we as clay which is easy to fall into sins. It is like David who was a great king, but he fell into the sin of filthiness. Nevertheless, he was in the mercy hands of God so he was able to cry "Have mercy on me and forgive me Lord" at the time of his fall. The result is God erased his sins with His mercy/ sacrifice. If David was outside the mercy hands of God, he would be destroyed. I hope we can understand it.

Now, whatever our sins, please have a meek heart and we will be able to confess our sins to God honestly and do not do the sins again. As a result, the mercy of God or the blood of God erases our sins. Sin is the heaviest burden in our life for it burdens us when we were born until in hell. Therefore, if God ends our sins with his mercy, He will also be able to end other problems. The late rev. Totalis always said that confessing our sins is the short cut to be helped by God. I hope we can understand it.

b. Genesis 39: 21-23

39:21 But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

39:22 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing.

39:23 The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph's authority, because the LORD was with him; and whatever he did, the LORD made it prosper.

Joseph was in the prison although he was not guilty, yet he was in the carry hands of God. The advantage was God created success in his life. Joseph was in limited condition for he was in the prison (**Genesis 40:15**).

Maybe we are like Joseph who was in the prison --> we are bounded in education, experience, modal to work, etc as if we are in the prison. Nevertheless, we have to be convinced that if we are in the carry hands of God/ in the mercy hands of God, He will give us success although we are in limitation. It means God nourishes us.

In the previous part, it is said that there is God's help/ the mercy of God although we sin. It resembles to a baby who is in limited condition, yet his mother's hands nourish and make him proper.

Maybe we resemble to Joseph and a baby whose life is limited, but do not be hopeless because if we are in the carry hands of God/the mercy hands of God, we will be successful for God directly nourishes us. He does not help us only for the earthly things but He makes all things successful.

c. Psalms 103:4

103:4 Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,

The mercy of God becomes a crown. God is carrying us and also doing these things:

- forgiving our sins
- helping us
- making us successful and nourishing us
- Crowning us.

The crown is the possession of bride of heaven to welcome the bridegroom of heaven --> **Song of Solomon 3:11** *Go forth, O daughters of Zion, And see King Solomon with the crown With which his mother crowned him On the day of his wedding, The day of the gladness of his heart.*

The crown of mercy of God is to welcome Jesus' second coming: we meet Him face to face in clouds, get into the marriage supper of the Lamb/ happiness, enter paradise/ kingdom of 1000 years of peace and get into the everlasting kingdom of heaven. We are not stumbled.

Hence, do not stay outside the mercy of God = stumbling, but have a meek heart so we get his mercy/ stay in the carry hands of God and He will help us.

God blesses us!