

Sermon notes for Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> of October

## The Greatness of God

**1 Corinthians 1:25:** *Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.*

### 1. The foolishness of God

Last week we looked at a passage that described a time when Jesus' own people came to take Him by force, because they said, *He is out His mind*. They thought Him to be beside Himself, mad even (Mark 3:20-22,31-35). As we saw, the message of the gospel is foolishness (madness) to some people and yet to us who believe, it is *the power of God unto salvation*.

**John 10:20-21** - <sup>20</sup> *And many of them said, "He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?"* <sup>21</sup> *Others said, "These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"*

Was it madness or indeed was it power? ... and such power that even opened the eyes of the blind!

This passage in 1 Corinthians 1:25 says that the '*foolishness of God is wiser than man*'. What people perceive as madness was indeed a message of power.

### 2. The weakness of God

Last week we spoke about the *foolishness of God* and what that means. Today I want to share with you about the *weakness of God*. Of course, there is no foolishness with God just as there is no weakness in God.

However, was there ever weakness in God?

There was a time when God took on human form, was born of a woman and was nailed to a cross.

**2 Corinthians 13:4** - <sup>4</sup> *For though He was **crucified in weakness**, yet He lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you.*

Jesus was crucified in weakness: His hands were tied and nailed to a cross. In a moment of time, all our iniquities were laid upon a body that was already weakened by beatings and the loss of blood. Every sickness and every curse was also laid on his shoulders. However, in His greatest weakness, Jesus was still stronger than all hell against Him, and with hands tied, Jesus still

*...disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it (Colossians 2:15)*

In weakness He was still more powerful than the devil and all his forces. The weakness of God is stronger than men, stronger than hell even!

(maybe that is why Paul said, ‘*when I am weak, then I am strong*’ – he took that from Jesus)

*“For though He was **crucified in weakness**, yet He lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the **power of God toward you**”*

How we need a revelation of that power of God which is toward us!

### 3. The greatness of God

I love to meditate in the greatness of God. The book of Psalms is full of descriptions of the magnificent power of God, of His mighty deeds, of His wonders and signs.

**Psalms 145:3,5-6** - 3. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable.

5. I will meditate on the glorious splendour of Your majesty, and on Your wondrous works. 6 Men shall speak of the might of Your awesome acts, and I will declare Your greatness.

Throughout the centuries, many of the Jewish people practiced meditating in the greatness of God. One of the ways they do that is by remembering the story of Exodus, and how God saved them “with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm”

That expression (‘*with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm*’) is found many times, in several books, like Exodus, Deuteronomy, Psalms, 2 Kings, Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

### 4. The power of God’s finger

However, in reality, God didn’t even have to use the full strength of His arm or flex His omnipotent muscle to gain victory over the Egyptians. Strictly speaking, He just used a finger!

**Exodus 8:18-19** - 18 *Now the magicians so worked with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not. So there were lice on man and beast. 19 Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, “**This is the finger of God.**” But Pharaoh’s heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, just as the Lord had said.*

*This the finger of God – 1/5 of the power of His hand. That is all it took!*

**Luke 11:14-15, 20** - 14 *And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marvelled. 15 But some of them said, “He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.” 20 But if I cast out demons **with the finger of God**, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.*

Jesus is saying to people who were educated in the Torah that the same power that brought Israel out of the grip of Pharaoh, was back. The same '*finger of God*' was now releasing captives from the kingdom of satan into the Kingdom of God.

... And all it took was His finger.

Psalms 8 shows us the finger of God in the act of creation:

**Psalm 8:3-4** - *When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, 4 What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him?*

The point is that God is so great that what we see of His power, is simply "*the outer fringe of His works*" (**Job 26:14 NIV**) – not quite His full outstretched arm and mighty hand but His finger.

In **1 Kings 12:10** we find an interesting, arrogant, statement made by the king who succeeded King Solomon: "*my little finger shall be thicker than my father's waist*". That proved to be a foolish and untrue statement. However, that is true when it comes to the finger of God – God's little finger, 'the weakness of God', is stronger than man.

It was also the finger of God who wrote the Law on tablets of stone (**Exodus 31:18**). In **John 8:6,8** as a woman is being accused of adultery, Jesus writes again with His finger on the ground. **John 1:17** – *For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. The same finger of God authored both!*

Another interesting fact about the finger of God: In the days that followed Noah's flood, the ark came to rest on Mount Ararat. To this day, the locals call this place, "the finger of God".

### Conclusion

The finger of God is primarily a picture of God's unlimited, immense power. His finger is more powerful than all the people of the world, than all the fallen angels and demons, than any other power in the universe. The finger of God is a picture of His sovereignty!

The finger of God is mentioned in all these acts of God: from the act of creation to salvation, deliverance from oppression, victory over the enemy, from Law to Grace – all these involved the finger of God. God was able to do all that with the smallest member of His body. The weakness of God is indeed greater than men.

If God can do all of that, using so little of Himself, is there anything too hard for the Lord? Is there anything He cannot handle?

This picture of the finger of God should inspire us with a sense of awe and majesty. Let us take hold of this power that is available to us, let us believe it.

In times like these, let us meditate in the greatness of God. May we not see Him weak and small, because He isn't!