

Place: Lurgan Baptist 12:5:2013

MOSES, THE SERVANT OF THE LORD

Reading: Exodus 1:1-22

1. THE WORLD OF MOSES

Ordering a violin from a violin manufacturer, a celebrated musician demanded that the manufacturer use the best materials, take all the time necessary, and produce a first class instrument. Several months later the manufacturer, sent for him to try out the product. *After attempting to play the violin, he held it up in disgust, smashed it to pieces, paid for it, and walked out.* The manufacturer determining that he would perfect his product took the fragments and broken pieces and made a completely new instrument. Upon completing the instrument, the musician was called again to play the violin. After drawing the bow over the strings, and recognising the perfection of the work, he said “**Name your price.**” The manufacturer responded. “**There is no price. It’s the same instrument you smashed to pieces.**” Is this not the story of effective Christian service ? You see, while we may have trusted the Lord Jesus, no believer is a worthy instrument in the service of the Lord until broken by the disappointments of life and cast totally upon the Lord.

Then, and only then can you become an effective instrument in the hands of God. The truth still stands, “*God resisteth the proud , but giveth grace unto the*

humble.” (James 4:6) This is the story of Moses life. Without question we must acknowledge that he was a great leader. Dr. Kyle described Moses as “ *the greatest man among men in the whole history of the world.* ” Moses towers like a titan across the vast reaches of our Bible. He is mentioned in 261 verses in Exodus, 80 verses in Leviticus, 216 verses in Numbers, 35 verses in Deuteronomy, 51 verses in Joshua, and 47 verses in the other historical books. The book of Psalms and the Prophets also refer to him. He is mentioned in 37 verses in the Gospels, 19 verses in Acts and 22 verses in the Epistles. The Book of Revelation also refers to him. Altogether he is mentioned in 784 verses in the Bible, 705 in the Old Testament and 79 in the New Testament. Moses is one of the greatest men God ever made. Known as the emancipator and lawgiver of Israel, he was also a scholar, soldier, statesman and saint. ***A great leader, yes, but it was only after he had become a humble servant.***

In the Scriptures we read that “ *Moses verily was faithful in all his house.* ” The remainder of the text reads however “ *as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after.* ” (Heb 3:5) In fact, in one way or another Moses is called a servant of the Lord over 40 times in the Bible. His epitaph was this, “ *So Moses the servant of the Lord died.* ” (Deut 34:5) A discouraged preacher came home one day and told his wife he was going to quit. When she asked “ **why ?** ” he replied, “ *I just feel used.* ” She replied, “ *I don’t see why you are upset about that. I have heard you say many times that you want to be used.* ” My I do not want to be used by people, but I do want to be used by God. Is that your

desire ? Is this your prayer ?

*Oh, use me Lord, use even me
Just as Thou wilt and when and where
Until Thy blessed face I see
Thy rest, Thy joy, Thy glory share*

So for a few Sunday I want to talk to you about,
“ *Moses the servant of the Lord,*” and this I want to
speak to you about “ *The world into which Moses was
born,*” you see it was a world in which we see,

(1) THE MULTIPLICATION OF ISRAEL

Look if you will at (1:7) This chapter is about “ *the
children of Israel,*” five times in twenty two verses it
makes reference to the children of Israel. Do you see how
the book begins ? “ *Now,*” (1:1) And the word “ *now,*”
there connects with the book of Genesis. You see, the
story of Moses is a sequel to that of Joseph. Do you
remember Joseph ? Sold into slavery into Egypt, and
eventually through a series of God led events he rose from
slavery to the position of prime minister. In that position
he saved the nation from famine, and because respected
by Pharaoh his whole family consisting of 70 people was
brought to Egypt. According to D. C. Hughes “ *from the
going down to Egypt to the Exodus, 215 years, the 70 had
multiplied to 600,000 males.*” It appears that the total
population was well over two million people. (1) Now
when I think of this multiplication I think of,

(a) A PEOPLE HERE:

1. Can you see the Names of them ?

Look at (1:1) Moses is giving us the identity of the
children of Israel. Now isn't that an interesting thing ?
God begins this Book on Redemption by talking about a
people and He gives their names. One of the books in the
Old Testament that mentions names is First Chronicles ? I
mean how do you handle the first nine chapters of that
book ? I mean its just name after name after name
after name. Is it difficult for you ? Well, it's difficult for me
also. I mean who in the world is interested in a list of
names ? Well I want to tell you something, if your name
was there you'd be very interested wouldn't you ? Perhaps
you recall getting your examine results through a list of
names that were posted on a notice board. My is this
not what redemption is all about ? You see, when you
come to know the Lord Jesus your name is written in the
Lamb's book of life. Do you know something ? You are
precious to the Lord this !

2. Can you see the Number of them ?

“ *And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob
were seventy souls,*” (1:5) Here are the children of Israel
and they are not lost. There is no such thing as the lost
tribes of Israel for God knows every one of them. You see,
when you are saved. When you are named, as one of the
children of God, the Lord has got your name and He has
got your number and you are precious and important to
Him. My do you feel in those testing circumstances
that the Lord has forsaken you ? That the Lord has
forgotten you ? Never. He says, “ *Behold I have graven*

thee upon the palms of my hands,” (Is 49:15) It simply means that God’s care and remembrance of us is continual.

*Never a heartache and never a groan,
Never a teardrop and never a moan
Never a danger but there on the throne
Moment by moment He thinks of His own*

(b) A PROMISE HERE:

You see, their fruitfulness in the land of Egypt was the result of a promise which God had given to Jacob when Jacob and his family were moving to Egypt. Do you recall the promise ? “ *I will there make of thee a great nation.*” (Gen 46:4) “ *There,*” in Jacob’s case meant Egypt. I mean had Jacob and his family not abode in Egypt they would have missed the blessing of fruitfulness. I wonder are you in the place of God’s appointment ? Elijah was. That’s why he received the provision of God. For God said, “ *I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there,*” (1 Kings 17:5) Jeremiah was. He was told to go to the potter’s house to hear from God. Jeremiah was told, “ *There will I cause thee to hear my words.*” (Jer 18:1) That’s why he received the precepts of God. Do you wonder why you’re not experiencing the blessing of God ? Is it because you are not “ there,” in the place of blessing ? “ *There,*” means being in the Lord’s house on the Lord’s day. “ *There,*” means obeying the Lord in the breaking of bread. “ *There,*” means being in fellowship with your brethren. “ *There,*” means being in the place of availability to Him ? And when you are “ *there,*” God’s

promises will prove stronger than mans problems. If God said He would make Israel a great nation, then He would do it in spite of the problems of slavery. You see, what God promises He is able to perform. My

**God is still on the throne
And He will remember His own
Though trials may press us
And burdens distress us
He never will leave us alone
God is still on the throne
And He will remember His own
His promise is true
He will not forget you
God is still on the throne**

(c) A PROBLEM HERE:

Do you see what (1:7) says ? They “ *increased abundantly.*” After years of remaining in Egypt, it seems apparent that the children of Israel became contented with Egypt. And why not ? They had traded a land of famine for a land of fruitfulness. They exchanged a land of pain for a land of plenty. They had found the good life in Egypt. As Douglas White says, “ *That which was designed to be temporary was beginning to be looked upon as permanent.*” You see, Egypt being a land of ease and luxury would encourage spiritual and moral decay. And is this not exactly happened ? Do you recall what Joshua told the Israelites after they had arrived in Canaan ? “ *Put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood (the Euphrates) and in*

Egypt and serve ye the Lord.” (Joshua 24:15) The phrase “ *And in Egypt,*” means that idolatry was practised by at least some of the Israelites in Egypt. (Ezek 20:7) You see, *Israel not only needed to be taken out of Egypt, but Egypt needed to be taken out of Israel.* They were living in the very best of the land, Goshen (Gen 46:28) and they had so much in their hands they didn’t realise the great need of their hearts. As they explained later, they “ *sat by the flesh pots and did eat bread to the full.*” (16:3) My how is it that materialism seems to sap the very life blood of the church ? Materially rich but spiritually poor. Is that you ? The story is told of how Thomas Aquinas once called upon Pope Innocent the Second. The old apostate Pope was counting a large sum of money. “ *You see,*” Thomas said the Pope, “ *the church can no longer say, ‘ silver and gold have I none,’*” Thomas replied, “ *That’s true but the church also can no longer say, ‘ in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.’*” James Merritt says, “ *Never measure your success by what you own, you measure your success by what owns you.*” (1)

(2) THE MOBILIZATION AGAINST ISRAEL

To mobilize is to prepare for war, or to organize for a purpose. Here we see that materialism give way to antagonism, prosperity give way to hostility, concord give way to conflict. *Now we will never understand the opening chapter of Exodus unless we grasp the fact that this was an attack of Satan on the Jewish race to stop the coming of the Son of God.* This was more than political strategy this was Satanic opposition. Do you recall what

God said in the book of Genesis ? Speaking to Satan “ *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed, it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel.*” (Gen 3:15) Do you not see an outbreaking of the Serpent’s enmity against the seed of the woman ? Why if all the male children of the Hebrews were destroyed, there would have been no David, and if no David, then no Saviour. You see, God had designated Israel as the nation into which Messiah would be born. *Is it therefore surprising that Satan would seek to destroy the Israelites ?* Do you know what it would take to destroy Israel ? Well, Jeremiah says “ *Thus saith the Lord who giveth the sun for a light by day and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, who divideth the sea when its waves roar, the Lord of hosts is his name. If those ordinances depart from me saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever.*” (Jer 31:35-36)

You see, the only way the King of Egypt will get rid of the Jews is to get rid of the universe, and that he cannot do. As Dean Inge of England, said “ *The Jew has stood at the graveside of every persecutor.*” The story is told of Napoleon that one of his generals asked him what he believed to greatest miracle of all time. Without hesitation he said, “ ***The Jew.***” My Israel is one of the greatest phenomena that history has witnessed. Even though her neighbours outnumber her fifty to one, she has proved too strong militarily for them. Even though more than sixty thousand individual votes have been cast in the United Nations against Israel she is the nation that will not go away. Now Egypt wanted Israel to go away for do you

notice here,

(a) A NEW MAN:

Look if you will at (1:8) Stephen refers to him as “ *another king.* ” (Acts 7:18) The Greek word is heteros which means “ *another of a different kind.* ” Some believe he was a foreigner who had conquered Egypt but whatever, he “ knew not Joseph. ” (1:8) No one remembered the famine. No one recalled the granaries of stored grain. No one recollected how a wise young Jewish prime minister had stepped out of obscurity to save the day. That was ancient history. Irrelevant. *Yet is this not the age in which we live ?* I mean Christianity, the Judeo-Christian heritage has contributed much to the nations of the world even as Joseph contributed much to Egypt. But we are living in a different time. A king has arisen who knows not Joseph. In other words, a time has arrived in our nation when many do not understand or appreciate the good that Christianity has done. And my when we lose our heritage, when this nation is cut away from its Bible roots, and its Judeo Christian ethics we have lost something which has made us great. I mean what do they use to say ? They said that the “ *secret of England’s greatness is the open Bible.* ” But not today.

Do we not live in age in which the dark storm clouds of opposition and hatred are increasingly gathering over the people of God ? Is the stage not being set for the Anti-Christ ? No appreciation of Joseph, no appreciation of Jesus and all that He has done. (a)

(b) A NEW PLAN:

Do you see what (1:10) says ? Do you see that word “ *wisely,* ”? It means “ *shrewdly.* ” Let me tell you what this plan entailed. It took into consideration,

1. Their Bondage: (1:14)

2. Their Burdens: (1:11)

3. Their Bitterness: (1:14)

4. Their Babies: (1:16)

My there is no way to describe this situation. Life was hard. The hours were long. The workload was heavy. Children were being killed. Beatings were being administered and there was no trade union to represent the workers. As we read these words we cannot help think about the dark days prior to World War 2 when the fortunes of the Jewish people in Germany changed so drastically under a hateful ruler named Adolph Hitler. Not only were Jews murdered and huddled into death camps they were forced into cruel corporate slavery. Housed in inhuman conditions, many of these modern-era slaves were simply worked to death. And what about to-day ?

I mean in Pharaoh’s day they were casting baby boys into the Nile. Can you imagine that ? Here is a man that has enlisted his whole nation to join him in the killing of babies. You say, how cruel. Yes. How uncivilized. Yes. How inhumane. Yes. A whole nation, giving itself to the killing of little baby boys. Does it not sound familiar ? We do not call it infanticide we call it abortion. It’s estimated that 190,000 abortions take place in England and Wales

annually. Yet God's Word says, "*Thou shalt not kill.*" (Ex 20:13) My they are throwing little unborn babies into the Nile but do you think its going to stop there ? Oh, no. They are talking now about the quality of life. They're saying now, "*We are interested in the quality of life. Do you think that person should live that long ?*" My do you see the world into which Moses was born ? Do you see the world in which we live ? Sure, there was (1) (2) But there was,

(3) THE MINISTRATION FOR ISRAEL

There was help for Israel. Where ? In God. Well, why does God allow His people to suffer ? Why did God allow my loved one to die ? Why does God allow me to be seriously ill ? Why does God allow my children to rebel against me ? These questions and a thousand more, are so constant and pressing that we often find ourselves depressed about life, disappointed with God, and disinclined to serve Him. Yet, "*Standing somewhere in the shadows we will find Jesus,*" You see, there are certain truths that will enable us to stay afloat in a sea of evil. For one thing, there is,

(a) THE PROVISION OF GOD:

Now Pharaoh gets these two midwives, Shiphrah and Puah. Now, girls, you thought you had a funny name, what if your Mom and Dad had named you Shiphrah ? Who is this ? "*This is little Shiphrah.*" Well who is that ? "*Puah.*" By the way, the two names themselves are beautiful names because Shiphrah means "*beauty,*"

and Puah means "*splendour,*" So he called in these midwives, and he told them what he wanted them to do, but did you notice (1:17) ? You see, sight sees the visible Pharaoh, faith sees the invisible God. And the Bible says, "*We ought to obey God rather than men.*" (Acts 5:29) Stop and think for a moment. Were the foundations of our faith not built upon resistance and rebellion ? There was a mother church that said "*Believe this and worship in the way we tell you.*" And what did our fathers in the Reformation do ? They said, "*We will not. Salvation is by grace alone through faith alone, in Christ alone. Here we stand we can no other.*" My isn't God's provision amazing ? I mean in the crisis of life the right person with the right word at the right time comes in the right way and ministers to us. They become a Jonathan to us and strengthen our hand in the Lord. (a)

(b) THE PURPOSE OF GOD:

You say, "*What's God doing ? What's going on down here ?*" I'll tell you what's going on. God is stirring up the nest to get these people to desire something better than old Egypt land. I'll tell you what God's doing. God is turning up the heat of the furnace to get them miserable down there in Egypt. Now we tend to look at our lives through a single lens, that is our comfort. When the Lord brings comfortable things into our lives we conclude that He is doing a good job. When unpleasant circumstances arise we might conclude that He is failing. Yet the Bible goes out of its way to emphasise that His purpose for us is quite different. For it is to conform us to the image of Christ. (Rom 8:29) I wonder are you in the crucible

this ? Are you experiencing the heat of the furnace ?
Arthur T. Pierson says,

Being determined to perfect His saints, He puts His precious metal into His crucible. But He sits by it, and watches it. Love is His thermometer, and marks the exact degree of heat, not one instant's unnecessary pang will He permit, and as soon as the dross is released so that He sees Himself reflected in the fire, the trial ceases. (a) (b)

(c) *THE PITY OF GOD:*

For later in this book the Lord says, “ *I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters for I know their sorrows and I am come down to deliver them*,” (3:7-8) Do you think that your hard moments and tests escape the Lord's notice ? Have you begun to think that God could not be aware of your circumstances or if He is aware He does not care ? My that's a lie from the Devil himself. On Tuesday night last, Alan rang me from Muckamore Abbey, Antrim. He rings me often to see how I am and assures me of his prayers. He misses his mum so much. Several years ago she took cancer. I recall going into to see her one day in Belvoir Park Hospital, Belfast.

She was getting treatment and very low physically. I can still hear her saying yet, “ *Denis, has the Lord forgotten me ?*” Is that what you're saying this ? “ *Where is God ? Has the Lord forgotten me ? Has He forsook me ?*” My He's right there at your side. He has never left. He

has never taken His eye off you. He has never ceased caring for you, thinking about you, watching over you. You are His concern. Joseph Scriven was born on the 10th September, 1819 in Banbridge. He studied at Trinity College, Dublin, and while there he was saved by God's grace. He graduated in the year 1842 and the same year he was engaged to be married. His marriage was arranged for the summer of 1844 but just on the eve of his wedding day, his sweetheart was accidentally drowned in the River Bann. Joseph decided to make a fresh start and the following year immigrated to Canada where he settled around the borders of Lake Ontario. There he preached the gospel and helped the poor. In those years another tragedy crossed his pathway. His second girl, Eliza Roche, fell ill following a chill. He nursed her for three years, but in spite of all the medical effort Eliza's condition slowly deteriorated and she died. For the remainder of his life Scriven seemed to carry with him a secret sorrow.

His path, though dark, was one of deep fellowship with God, and there was born in Scriven's heart one of the sweetest hymns known today in the English language.

**Can we find a friend so faithful,
Who will all our sorrows share
Jesus knows our every weakness
Take it to the Lord in prayer**

