

Place: Lurgan Baptist 26:1:2014

MOSES, THE SERVANT OF THE LORD

Reading: Numbers 10:29-36

17. COME AND JOIN US

During his days as President, Thomas Jefferson and a group of companions were traveling cross-country on horseback. They came to a river that had left its banks due to a recent down pour. The swollen river had washed the bridge away, thus they were forced to cross the river on horseback. Because of the rapid currents, it would be extremely dangerous, but it was the only way to cross. Several of the party plunged into the river, with its rapid currents, and made it to the other side. A traveler, who was not part of the group, stood to the side watching. When he saw that the others had made it safely across, he looked at President Jefferson and asked him to “*ferry him across the river.*” The President agreed, and the man climbed up, and they both safely made it to the other side.

As the stranger slid off the back of the horse, one in the group asked him, “*Tell me, why did you chose the President to ask this favor of?*” The man was shocked to learn that it was President Jefferson that had helped him, and admitted that he had no idea it was the President. He simply said, “*All that I know is that on some of your faces was written the answer ‘No,’ and, on some of your faces was written the answer ‘Yes.’ His was a ‘Yes’ face.* In the passage we have read we meet a man with a

‘Yes,’ face. A man who said ‘No,’ initially but ‘Yes,’ ultimately. You see, here where Israel moving away from Sinai. We get the time line in (10:11) “*And it came to pass on the twentieth day of the second month in the second year that the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle of testimony and the children of Israel took their journeys.*” Israel had spent eleven months at Sinai. (Ex 19:1) During that time they received the law of God, built the tabernacle and were organized for the rest of their journey to Canaan. It had been a most eventful year with lots of ups and downs, but now it was over and the Lord was ready for the people to resume their journey to the Land of Canaan. As we see them make their journey we eaves drop upon a conversation. Two men are involved, the leader of the Hebrew nation, Moses and another man by the name of Hobab.

Hobab is the son of Raguel which is simply another name for Jethro the father in law of Moses. (Ex 2:18 3:1) That means that Hobab was Jethro’s son or if you like Hobab was the brother in law of Moses. Now as the Israelites moved away from Sinai towards Paran, Hobab was near the country where he was born. He thought it was now time to leave the Hebrews. His old man had gone man back home (Ex 18:27) and Hobab now reckons that he should return to his birthplace. But Moses will have none of it. He remonstrates with Hobab, “*No,*” said Moses, “*you stay with us, come along with the Israelites join us on our journey, eventually we shall arrive at our land and you may share all the blessings that await us.*” “*Hobab, we don’t want you to go away, we would rather have you as our fellow traveling companion.*” “*Hobab we are*

journeying unto the place of which the Lord said I will give it you, come thou with us and we will do thee good.” (10:29) You could say that Moses was doing a little one-on-one evangelism and soul-winning. Indeed can we not as believers identify with these words of Moses ? Do these words not express the evangelistic objective, the loving concern, the genuine burden of the church of Jesus Christ ? We would say to those of you who are here today unsaved, unsure, backslidden, “ *Come thou with us and we will do thee good.* ” (10:29) You see, here is,

(1) AN INVITATION THAT IS VITAL

This was not a fleeting thought which crossed Moses mind as he though he felt obliged to object when he heard that his brother in law was going to move away. No, indeed we discover that when Moses first give this invitation Hobab rejected it. Do you see (10:30) ? But Moses was not as easily put off as we are, he was not easily dissuaded. For he came back and said, “ *Leave us not I pray thee.* ” “ *Come thou with us and we will do thee good,* ” Now this is an invitation that,

(a) REFLECTS THE CONCERN OF THE SAINT:

Moses was concerned, burdened, for Hobab.

1. It was a Natural Concern:

Moses had married Hobab’s sister Zipporah (Ex 2:21) And after visiting her it seems Hobab was on his way back to Midian when Moses expresses this evangelistic

concern. You see, Moses has a love for his brother in law and believes that if Hobab stays with him it will be for Hobab’s advantage. Now true evangelism begins where ? At home. Did the Lord Jesus not establish this principle when he said to the man who had been delivered from a whole army of demons, “ *Go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee and hath had compassion on thee.* ” (Mk 5:19) Do you recall what was Andrew’s first concern after he had found the Messiah ? John says “ *He first findeth his own brother Simon and he brought him to Jesus.* ” (Jn 1:41) My don’t let any complexes or complacency close doors between your family and you or rob you of the opportunity to introduce Jesus Christ to those who are closest to you.

I think of an old man that cared for his sick wife. He sat by her bedside every day, and did all that he could to make her more comfortable. Her mind was beginning to slip at times, and she would say things that made no sense. One day, she looked at her husband and said, “ *John, it’s getting late, aren’t you coming to bed ?* ” He started to tell her that it was only the middle of the day, but stopped and said, “ *Yes, honey, I will be coming to be in a few minutes.* ” She then asked, “ *John, are all the windows and doors shut.* ” He answered, “ *Yes, honey, all the windows and doors are shut.* ” She asked, “ *John, have you turned off all of the lights.* ” He said, “ *Yes, honey, I’ve turned off all of the lights.* ” With her last words she asked, “ *John, are all the children in ?* ”

I ask you, today, are all the children in ? Do you have loved ones that are unsaved and cannot claim Heaven as

their home ? Are your mother and father in ? Are your son and daughter in ? Are your brother and sister in ? Are all the children in ? 1.

2. It was a Spiritual Concern:

Moses was burdened for the spiritual welfare of his brother in law. And does this concern for the souls of others not permeate the New Testament ? Is this not a pulse beat which throbs through the pages of Scripture. Think of the Lord Jesus, as He stood on the heights outside the city and wept because the city and the nation had rejected Him. (Lk 19:41) Do you remember the great concern the apostle Paul had for the souls of his fellow country men ? “ *Brethren my hearts desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved.* ” (Rom 10:1) This aggressive evangelism is a dominant factor in the total ministry of this illustrious apostle. Can you see Paul and his evangelistic zeal as Dr. Luke portrays him in the book of Acts ? Can you see him as daily he discusses in the school of Tyrannus with those he can interest in the gospel ? (Acts 19:9) Can you see him on Mars Hill engaging in dialogue with Athenian philosophers ? (Acts 17:22)

Can you see Paul chained to a Roman soldier but still the gospel of the grace of God is not bound ? (Acts 28:24) What an extraordinary prisoner. He is manacled hands and feet, yet when he addresses these Roman dignitaries, when he speaks to Bernice and Agrippa his listeners are disturbed. They give every indication that they are moved by Paul’s preaching. Do you remember how he responded

to Agrippa’s charge that he the apostle was trying to get others saved. He admits it. And he adds, “ *I would to God that not only thou but also all that hear me this day were both almost and altogether such as I am except these bonds.* ” (Acts 26:29) He wanted everyone to be as he was a Christian. Personal concern. One of the old Puritans used to speak of having a concern. Do you have this spiritual concern for others ? Theodore Cuyler wanted to learn all he could about the godly Robert Murray McCheyne. So he asked an elderly gentleman who knew McCheyne, “ *Can you tell me some of the texts he preached on or some outstanding quotations he used ?* ” The mans shook and he said, “ *I’m sorry, I don’t remember.* ” Perplexed Cuyler inquired, “ *Well, don’t you recall anything about him ?* ” “ *Oh that’s a different question said the grey haired Christian.* ”

“ *I will never forget the time McCheyne came to visit in our home when I was just a lad.* ” He said to me, “ *James I have come to see your sick sister,* ” then he looked into my eyes and with deep emotion said, “ *James I am very concerned about your soul.* ” “ *Sir, I have forgotten his sermons but I can still feel the tremble of his hand and see the tears in his eyes.* ” His concern for my soul resulted in my salvation.” Do you recall when you first got saved ? When you had less knowledge but more passion ? When you had less theology but more fervency ? When you had less pride but more power ? Then you had a concern but what about now ? “ *Come thou with us good,* ” (a)

(b) REVEALS THE CONDITION OF THE SINNER:

You this invitation was given to Hobab. Who was Hobab ? Well, he was a Midianite, and Midian was a son of Abraham by Keturah and that made Hobab an Arab. (Gen 25:1-6) There is no doubt that Hobab had been reared in the idolatry and paganism of the Midianites. (25:1-6) And when his sister Zipporah had married Moses she had done much more than leave her father and mother. She had left the gods and religion of her people. She had rejected the false gods, and accepted Moses' God as the true, and living God. You see, here was a man who was outside the pale of Israel but Moses gives this great evangelistic invitation, "*Come thou with us and we will do thee good.*" My have you ever recognized your condition before God ? Let me tell you what the Bible says, "*The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked who can know it.*" (Jer 17:9) The Bible says, "*There is none righteous no not one.*" (Rom 3:10) "*For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.*" (Rom 3:23)

My have you discovered that you are a sinner ? A sinner who needs cleansing, pardon, and forgiveness. That's why we would say to you this "*Come thou with us good,*" "*leave the pathways of sin and throw in your lot with the people of God.*" (1)

(2) AN INSPIRATION THAT IS SPECIAL

You see, Moses wants to inspire and stimulate Hobab to join the Israelites so he says, "*Come thou with us good,*" that sounds very pompous does it not ? To suggest to someone that your company would be beneficial for

them sounds arrogant. But is this not what Moses was inferring ? Why does he use this language ? Well, I think there were certain valid reasons why Moses thought that it would be good for Hobab to join them and go with them to the Promised Land. My when we invite you to come to Christ we are doing more than offering you a "*get out of Hell free card.*" Thank God it is that but it's much more. We are promising more than just blessings after this life is over. Why we say to you this "*Come thou with us and we will do thee good,*" because of

(a) *THE PERSON BESIDE US:*

You see, *the Lord is with us.* Now God was with Israel. You have only got to look at the closing verses of this chapter to see that this was so. Do you see (10:35-36) ? You see, the Ark was the symbol of the presence of the Lord. (Jos 3:3, 11) And if Hobab could be where God was then it would be good for him. Now we dare to boast in this church that when we come together in the name of the Lord Jesus He is here in our midst. He Himself says, "*where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them.*" (Matt 18:20) My we have not come to listen to a preacher, our primary reason for coming is not to meet one another, we have come together because we want to experience the presence of the Lord.

Now if that is so, then its to your advantage to be with us and so we say "*come thou with us and we will do thee good,*" because of the person beside us. Do you see what Moses tells Hobab ? He says, "*the Lord hath spoken*

good concerning Israel.” I tell you there are many nations in the world and they speak anything but good about Israel but “ *the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.*” Moses is saying “ *The Lord did not redeem us to abandon us in this wilderness. He will go with us; He will bless us and He will help us all the way to the Promised Land.*” My as we journey toward glory, we also have certain promises that we can count on. I mean,

1. The Lord has promised to Sustain us:

Just as He fed Israel in that wilderness with the manna and the quail, He will take care of us His children. (Phil. 4:9)

2. The Lord has promised to Satisfy us:

Israel never was satisfied with what they received from the hand of God. No matter how much they were given, they always grumbled. Yet the Psalmist says, “ *For he satisfieth the longing soul,*” (Ps 107:9)

3. The Lord has promised to Secure us:

God did what He promised and He brought Israel safely through into the Promised Land. My God did not save you to lose you along the way. Just like Israel, “ *And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers,*” (Deut. 6:23) He saved us for a purpose and part of that purpose is to deliver us safely home to Heaven. He saved us for keeps. (Jn 10:28) No wonder we say to you this “ *Come thou with us and we will do thee good,*” (a)

(b) THE PEOPLE BEHIND US:

Is this not why Moses wanted Hobab to go with him ? I mean look at (10:32) In other words if God has blessed us so we will be a blessing to you. Now in the New Testament there is one word that sums all this up. It’s the term fellowship. Now no church is perfect, and if you are so inclined, you can find much to criticize and what appear to be good reasons for staying away. But when you lay all the deficiencies of the church alongside the good she does, the later will always outweigh the former. My this local church is far from perfect but think of the good she has brought into your life. Roger Ellsworth put it like this,

**She has nurtured thee and thine
On solid Bible meat and good gospel wine
She has constantly called you away from lesser things
And bidden you to faithfully serve the King of Kings**

**Oft times amidst life’s fevered pace
She did your weary tattered soul embrace
And when under the crushing load you did bow
She reached out to soothe your furrowed brow**

**When your sorrow did multiply and abound
She did you and yours with prayers surround
She has gladly your cares and burdens owned
And made you know you were not alone**

That’s why we say to you this “ *Come thou with us and good,*” (a) (b)

(c) THE PROSPECT BEFORE US:

Do you see what Moses says to Hobab ? (29) “ *We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you.* ” (10:29) Of course, Moses was speaking of the land of Canaan. It was land that “ *floweth with milk and honey.* ” It was a country that God had promised to His people, provided for His people, and prepared for His people. It was the home of the redeemed people of God, the children of Israel. And though every New Testament believer can live in Canaan right now, one of these days we are going to move to “ *the land that is fairer day.* ” You see vagabonds are those who have no home, strangers are those who are away from home; but, **pilgrims are those who are headed home.** My we can say with Samuel Stennett

*On Jordan's stormy banks I stand
And cast a wishful eye
To Canaan's fair and happy land
Where my possessions lie
I am bound for the Promised Land*

Do you catch something of,

1. The Certainty of this Prospect:

Do you see (10:29) ? “ *The Lord said, I will give it you.* ” And God did so.. Do you know what lies in store for the people of God ? Glory. Peter says, “ *an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away reserved in heaven for you.* ” (1 Pet 1:5)

2. The Glory of this Prospect:

The spies referred to it as a land that “ *floweth with milk and honey.* ” (Num 13:27) Israel where going to a glorious land and Hobab could join them. My unsaved this prospect of the believer is not only certain but its glorious. A little Swedish girl was walking with her father one dark night along a country road. Looking up at the cloudless sky studded with stars she cried, “ *Oh Daddy is the wrong side of heaven is so beautiful what must be the right side be.* ” We say to you this “ *We're going home to glory soon* ” Will you be there ? Is heaven your destination? If not we say to you, “ *Come thou with good,* ” (1) (2)

(3) AN IMPARTATION THAT IS MUTAL

Do you see what Moses says in (10:31) ? In other words Moses is saying Hobab can make a contribution. Some scholars feel that this shows a flaw in Moses faith. After all wasn't the nation being led by the pillar of cloud and the ark of the Lord ? Why draft a human guide when they had so much help from heaven ? But divine providence does not minimize or destroy human ability or responsibility. Israel didn't need Hobab to tell them where to march or where to camp, the Lord would do that. But Hobab knew the topography of the wilderness and could assist them on making other decisions as they moved from place to place. Charles Spurgeon said, “ *We ought to learn from this, I think that we seek the guidance of God in providence yet we may frequently find direction and guidance in the use of our own common sense, our discretion with which the Lord has endowed us.* ”

My we don't "lean on," our own understanding but neither do we ignore it. God wants us to act intelligently as well as believingly and the spiritually minded Christian knows how to use both heart and mind in discerning God's will. (Rom 12:2) You see, what Moses was saying was this.

(a) Israel would be a Blessing to Hobab:

"What goodness the Lord will do unto us, the same will we do unto thee," (10:32) "Hobab, if you come with us, you will not regret it. You will experience the blessings of God with us." As a poor and unknown young man, Matthew Henry, the renowned Bible scholar wished to marry a girl whose father did not approve of the marriage. The father argued that, although he was a good scholar, and an excellent preacher, "they did not even know where he came from." The daughter had a ready answer. She said, "Daddy, I may not know where he came from, but I know where he is going, and, I want to go with him." My we know where we are going, do you not want to go with us ? (a) But then,

(b) Hobab would be a Blessing to Israel:

"Thou mayest be to us instead of eyes." (10:31) Not only would he be blessed, but he would also be used of God if he went with them. My without the Lord you have tremendous potential which can be unleashed and used by the Lord. The question is, how will you respond to this invitation ? Hobab responded well, for we read in

(10:33) "And they departed," later we read of him in the Promised Land enjoying the blessings that God had promised Israel. (Jud 1:16 4:1) Art Linkletter, in his book "Yes, You Can," told of an occasion when Walt Disney drove him to a piece of deserted property near Anaheim, California. As the two walked the property, Disney began to paint a picture of a theme park he wanted to build. He described in great detail his dream. Disney encouraged Linkletter to buy the land surrounding his, explaining that he could, in return, sell it to developers who would build motels and restaurants on the property.

Linkletter recalled thinking that Disney's dream was a fantasy that wouldn't appeal to people and respectfully declined the offer. Disney would go on to build his theme park as we know as Disneyland. *Linkletter estimates that he lost approximately one million dollars per step that day by not buying into Disney's dream and accepting his offer. What a loss. But nothing compared to yours. "For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul ?" (Mk 8:36) Will you come and join us this ? Will you come with us and stand before the cross at Calvary ? Will you look on Christ whom your sins have pierced ? Will you come with us and stand at the empty tomb ? Will you come like us and trust this living Saviour ? "Come thou good,"*

**I am bound for the Promised Land,
I am bound for the Promised Land.
Oh, who will come and go with me?
I am bound for the Promised Land**

